THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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A BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

WITH THIS number of THE COMMONWEAL, we begin the ninth year of publication of the only weekly review in the United States, controlled and edited by Catholic laymen, devoted to the presentation and application of Catholic religious principles in relation to the social problems of today. In our first issue—November 12, 1924—we said that we hoped to occupy a position in American journalism hitherto left vacant. We did not mean in any way to compete with the well-established and excellent official publications of the Church: the diocesan newspapers, or the literary reviews and magazines controlled and edited by the clergy. In no sense did we—or could we—put ourselves forward as an authoritative spokesman for the Church. We would draw our own information from all reliable sources; we would take our principles from the official teaching body of the Church, and use that information, and apply those principles, independently and individually, as laymen. Where the opinions of our editors and contributors and correspondents might differ on subjects as yet left unsettled by the competent authority, THE COMMONWEAL meant to be an open forum for the discussion of such differences in a spirit of fairness, and an atmosphere of good temper. The main reason why we believed that Catholic laymen should have such an organ as THE COMMONWEAL was expressed as follows:—

"There is being promulgated a widely accepted theory of what civilization is, or what it should become, which if it proves successful means the end of Christendom, so far as the expression or influence of Christian principles and ideas in the institutions of civilized life are concerned. It is unquestionably a spiritual, moral, and patriotic duty for thinking people to at least make an effort to apply the conserving and regenerative forces of Christian traditions, experiences, and culture to the solution of the problems that all men of good will are today striving to solve. As opposed to the confused, confusing, and conflicting complex of private opinions and personal impressionism, mirrored in so many influential secular journals, the editors of THE COMMONWEAL believe that nothing can do so much for the betterment, the happiness, and the peace of the American people as the influence of the enduring and tested principles of Catholic Christianity. To that high task THE COMMONWEAL is dedicated."

How well, or how poorly, we have carried on our task it is for our readers to say. Those readers have

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grown from a small group to many thousands, including hundreds who are not members of the Catholic Church, but who are sympathetic with the effort being made by the Church to conserve and strengthen the threatened institutions of Christian civilization: religion, the family, individual property rights, individual and local liberty. It may be justly said that the influence of THE COMMONWEAL is out of all proportion greater than the numbers of its readers would indicate, because of the high quality of influence and leadership possessed by those readers.

That they themselves consider our work useful, and worthy of support, is shown by the fact that they saved us from suspension of publication last spring, when we frankly told them that their numbers did not as yet suffice to supply the minimum cost of such a journal as this and asked them to contribute above the subscription price in order to make up the difference. The success of that appeal staved off the threatened suspension, and has carried us through the summer months; but we still are facing the gravest of difficulties, and again we lay those difficulties before our readers.

Two things are urgently required to solve our problem.

First:—The immediate increase of membership subscriptions to The Calvert Associates—ranging from ten dollars to those larger amounts which are the principal means of supporting and extending our work. These extra payments enable us to place THE COMMONWEAL in public libraries and other places where its influence radiates into the secular world and helps to form public opinion in the highest circles. Our present members should gain for us at least one new member to join this group of patrons.

Second:—The prompt enlargement of the sale of THE COMMONWEAL in Church vestibules, for which purpose a special offer is made to all pastors which involves no expense to them and returns a moderate profit in many cases. We shall be glad to send particulars of this plan to those interested. And surely there are thousands of pastors who are interested in the work of laymen who are doing their best to extend the influence of the teaching members of the Church.

As we told our readers last spring, and what is now even more relevant, our justification for appealing for their aid in this emergency is the undoubted fact that there has been a most remarkable increase in the public influence and literary prestige of THE COMMONWEAL. While at no time designed as a money-making enterprise, our paper is steadily though slowly approaching a self-supporting position. This position is now more possible than before, because of the continuance of our circulation and the growth of our public influence even during the worst of the depression. Never was the particular service our paper is rendering to the Nation and to the Church more needed. The opportunity to bring the influence of Catholic philosophy and of the ethical and moral principles of the Church to bear upon the solution of our social problems is now unique. All thinking men know that the world is in the midst of a supreme crisis. The future of society depends upon the kind of thinking which our political and economic leaders apply to the solution of our social problems. Safe thinking must be based upon sound principles. The principles of Christianity alone can provide a safe and recreative basis for social reform. THE COMMONWEAL is an invaluable agency for the application of those principles.

Our members and readers responded so promptly, so generously and so amply to the appeal made to them last spring, that although we did not succeed in raising the whole sum we asked for, we were enabled to avoid catastrophe and to continue our work; but unfortunately we were not relieved to any great extent from our debts. Those have remained at approximately the same level, which, while small as compared with those carried by many other publishing enterprises, is an almost crushing one for us. We have every confidence, however, that we shall succeed in raising an amount to cover these; but in order to do so, we must prove to those whom we are asking to share this burden that our members and readers are going along with us throughout the coming year.

May we then not urge you with all earnestness to send in your membership subscriptions as soon as possible? It would be of great help to us also if you send the names of acquaintances who might become interested in THE COMMONWEAL as subscribers or members of The Calvert Associates.

Never before has the need of our work been so clearly apparent. Never before has the personal part of our readers in supporting it been so greatly needed or more deeply appreciated. We commend to their attention the following words of the greatest of all living lay champions of the Faith, G. K. Chesterton:—"Having heard with the utmost horror the suggestion of THE COMMONWEAL being in some peril, even of its own most beneficent existence, I can only say that the loss of THE COMMONWEAL would be colossal, not only to America, but to England, and to any number of places where intelligent men want the real issue between a Christian and a pagan culture debated in an intelligent way."

WEEK BY WEEK

DURING THE past week, campaign activities have been comparatively dull, despite a flurry of speeches that mean comparatively little. Republican tactics are apparently limited to two declarations: a business revival waits just around the corner, but will run away like a sprinting college half-back if the Democrats get into power. This is a somewhat hastily revised version of the 1928 "prosperity" argument, but its proponents rely upon the power of suggestion to make it appeal to Mr. John Voter. At any rate Governor Roosevelt was suffi-

The Political Scene

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ciently impressed by it to utter his long awaited comment upon the plea for a soldier's bonus in cash. This came as an appendage to a pretty effective indictment of Republican economic doctrine, and was confined to the following sensible remark quoted by Mr. Roosevelt from an earlier speech: "I do not see how, as a matter of practical sense, a government running behind $2,000,000,000 annually can consider the anticipation of bonus payment until it has a balanced budget, not only on paper but with a surplus of cash in the treasury." That seems to us all that there really is to the whole bonus argument. For as soon as there is a balanced budget, all the Presidents whom the nation can elect will not be able to prevent Congress from giving the veterans what they want. Until this moment comes, the best that can be hoped for is that fear of the economic consequences will delay the inevitable. The distressing thing about the bonus is not a dearth of good arguments against paying it, but the fact that there are so very many people who want it.

Old Lady Gossip

WHEN we were children we heard much about the sins of calumny and slander, which Christian moralists have always held is especial abhorrence. But since we have been relatively grown up, the distance between catechism maxims and real life on this point has been often and impressively revealed. There is nothing like politics to encourage the dissemination of yarns which have no basis in fact but which, passed from mouth to mouth by otherwise respectable people, find believers who in turn become expert advertising men. Catholics have sometimes been victims of whispering campaigns directed against those among them who have run for high office. Are they also fomenters of the despicable business? In New York State, Colonel Donovan is a candidate for the governorship. Persistent rumors to the effect that he is a lax, immoral and untrustworthy Catholic have cropped up in so many places that we believe it no more than fair to spike at least some of them here. The Lord alone is the searcher of hearts. To Him is reserved the knowledge of the motives and beliefs which rule the soul of any one of us. But we can say that, having been in touch with the Colonel over a number of years, we have found him to be a public-spirited citizen, a Catholic deeply interested in the work of the Church, and a man of exemplary private conduct. We are ready to offer a small sum (as large as we can muster) as a reward to anybody who can prove that he is or has been a drunken dragoon, a subsidizer of immorality or a fomenter of heresy. These being some of the current charges, it is probably well to list them. Others have been fairly well disposed of by the Bishop of Buffalo, under whose ecclesiastical jurisdiction Colonel Donovan lives. In a front page editorial in the *Catholic Union and Times,* the Bishop's official organ, one reads: "Here in Buffalo we are fully aware that Colonel Donovan has had full membership in his Church. . . . The whispering campaign is unworthy; it has no foundation in fairness and honesty."

Abuse of Office

THE USE of federal bureaus for political purposes is of course something that may be well within the law and have many precedents, yet be grossly unfair and contrary to good government. The foolish harrangue by an assistant postmaster general in which he told postmasters throughout the country that they would be expected to get out and work for the party in power, was an extreme case. There are besides, of course, without number quiet, individual cases of the bureaucracy that's in taking steps to keep itself in. This applies to municipal and state governments just as much as it does to the federal government. Civil service provisions that remove the greater number of federal workers from the influence of political patronage, while a big step in the right direction, do not obviate all the abuses. Further remedies and how to distinguish between the legitimate procedure of government and its prostitution for propaganda purposes, need to be carefully considered. We, and probably everybody else, are hardly in a position to talk with assurance on this subject as yet, but it is one which we recommend for study by political analysts.

FOR instance, the calling by the Commissioner of Customs, with the coöperation of the Department of Commerce and the Treasury, of so called "anti-dumping hearings" in the midst of a campaign in which the American people are being asked to consider the merits and demerits of existing tariff legislation, obviously may be a necessary and legitimate government function. It also can be, by the selection of cases and emphasis on evidence, a rank political maneuver. The estimable gentlemen in charge of the government departments cannot under our system of government whereby they now forsake their offices to go campaigning for their particular party be considered to be in the proper frame of mind for even tempered impartiality. This obviously is one of the marginal cases where determination of whether it was an abuse of power or not would be difficult, as it would be difficult to determine the ethics of public servants going to the ends of the country to address, at government expense, various civic societies and chambers of commerce, and giving partisan political harrangues. In all conscience at such times, they no doubt believe that their partisanship is identical with the best interests of the country. A decidedly clearer case is that of the secretary of the Federal Power Commission absenting himself from his post in Washington to do campaign work for the Republican National Committee in New York. No doubt this instance could be duplicated by the actions of officials in more local units of government. The issue of establishing a code for the control of this sort of thing, is not a partisan one but one in which all those in both parties should effectively interest themselves.

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THE RETIREMENT of Albert Halstead as American Consul General in London is a matter which we believe calls for an eminently deserved commendation by the people of the United States for a distinguished public servant. The non-contentious, non-political activity of such "career" men as Mr. Halstead is apt to result in their failing to receive due public recognition for their solid service to their country. The strength of England, its capacity for muddling through in spite of external and internal political upheavals of seemingly revolutionary proportions, is well known to have depended in the past on a permanent, well-trained bureaucracy which carried on the real bulk of government business efficiently no matter how the speech-makers shifted. Albert Halstead was of America's relatively small nucleus of such men and he has been a symbol of what high-minded, intelligent government service can be. Son of the journalist, Murat Halstead, of Cincinnati; a trusted assistant to William McKinley for four years when McKinley was governor of Ohio; a newspaper man in Cincinnati, Springfield, Massachusetts and Washington, District of Columbia; a consular officer in Vienna, Stockholm, Montreal, and finally in London, he has had a crowded life in which his personal charm and integrity have won for him the esteem and friendship of the many persons abroad and in his own country who have known him. In his last public appearance in London, he declared on the basis of his rich opportunities for observation, "if the depression is to be overcome, if business is to revive, then must commerce between nations be developed and encouraged instead of being hampered and destroyed by an excess of regulations." These steps he declared to be necessary "to save the world from disaster," and for lack of their being taken in a spirit of friendliness, and coöperation and progress, "the people are losing confidence in their politicians, bankers and other leaders." This is a non-partisan opinion which we believe is well worth considering.

Consul General

NEWS THAT Frank Ward O'Malley died suddenly in France, at the relatively early age of 57, will be read with deep regret far beyond the boundaries of the New York in which his best years were spent. There never has been any doubt that Mr. O'Malley was the king of American newspapermen; and now that he is gone, the chance to compare his work with similar writing at present in vogue heightens still more one's feeling that he was incomparable. Of course he toiled in the golden age of diction—the days of Huneker's purple, Mencken's red-and-black, Christopher Morley's early comfortable maroon. But what distinguished O'Malley from all these was his native sense of design. It was not for nothing that he had struggled to develop a talent for drawing, though this led eventually to little excepting cartoons. He had an instinctive sense for what is right and wrong in the poses of the world. Humor to him meant almost invariably the enjoyment of a scene in which somebody was off normalcy by about ten to forty degrees. Like a painter, however, he lacked ability to cover a large expanse of literary territory. As a maker of books or plays he was a decided failure. The result was an extraordinary usefulness to journalism. During recent years O'Malley, fleeing what he disliked in the United States, lived in Europe and envisaged his native country only during visits which were invariably the occasions of scintillating interviews. But of course he was always an American—of his own golden age.

The King of News Men

IF THERE are many places on earth more beguiling than Ravenna, we do not know of them. At any rate one may risk the assertion that the Congress of Christian Archaeology could have found no more suitable place to meet than in this ancient, half-crumbling town which is sacred to the memory of Dante and the Byzantine emperors. This Congress assembles many whose joy in life it is to burrow after relics of the Christian past, and with the help of these findings to reconstruct the life and art of the first centuries. There is really a surprising number of such scholars—at least it was surprising to Ravenna, which suddenly found all its ancient hostels crowded to the doors and was obliged to make a desperate search for board and lodging. The program arranged for the delectation of more than 600 guests included some items of which well-nigh every reader will be deeply envious. Thus, for example, there was a High Mass in San Vitale itself, read by a Cardinal Legate and sung in plain chant interspersed with Byzantine motets. Nevertheless the Congress was unselfishly mindful of the world at large, and vowed to publish a "volume or more" incorporating the latest findings in the realm of Christian archaeology. This work will be done under the authoritative direction of Monsignor Kirsch and promises to have almost as many estimable virtues as did San Apollinare.

An Archaeological Holiday

THEY SAY that one man was so startled that he looked around without noticing where he was going and fell over a folding camp chair. He plunged forward and was nearly the occasion of the scalping of a woman who had her hair all drawn up and wound around inside some sort of chromium plated, electric hair curler and dryer. This was at the American Beauty and Styles Exposition in the Grand Central Palace. The place is, it may be recalled, annually the scene of the automobile and motor boat shows. Family vehicles and country club models and fast runabouts have been familiar exhibits here, but to put women on this basis and assume to distinguish the 1932 models from, say, the 1929 models, seems to us, unless it is done with a good deal of humor, pretty sad.

The Eyes Have It

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Standardization is a nemesis of our times, and if they begin turning out the girls and women on a line production basis, we will be one step nearer, as far as the individual in this world is concerned, to the tedium of having life reduced to a pattern of rigid autonomic functions. Of course there always will be some brave women who will dare to be themselves. The papers reported that "optical drapery" was one of the new modes, like a new style in mudguards. Eyelash fringes in various shades were being promoted. They glue on and if the user keeps out of the rain, indulges in practically no exercise and avoids crying, they will last for a month. It was a platinum blond passing with some of these new eye drapes that caused the man to stumble. It was not reported whether he fainted.

Our Scholars Abroad

AMERICAN universities and foundations have begun to receive the sort of criticism that nothing can survive unchanged. Whatever is attacked so persistently and so pertinently must either lose its prestige or alter its ways. There is no convention of our educators which fails to leave on the records a mass of data and recommendations pointing to a deep dissatisfaction, not with the details but with the main drift and pretty nearly the whole result, of American education. It needs but the utterance of the name "Flexner" to crystallize the many fragmentary impressions in almost any mind, into a solid conviction, by furnishing a reminder of how much our most trenchant and imposing critic actually said when he got down to cases, and how little opposition he met when he said it. No one pretends, of course, that no one gets educated; like any other civilized country, we have brilliant home-made products to whom we can point with pride. But there is substantial agreement on the fact that, in proportion to the money we spend, the plant we have erected and the numbers we take on, our brilliant home-made products form a microscopic minority, while what may be called the characteristic result of our higher education is a brash, standardized mind full of uncoordinated facts. So stands the commonly received indictment. It is bad enough, in all conscience; and yet there appear to be signs that it will be even further enlarged, to take in the operation of our foreign fellowships.

VOICES have been raised to this general effect here and there, and they are now augmented by a very effective criticism in *Harper's*, written, the editors inform us, by a corporation of several authoritative fact-finders who prefer to remain unnamed. According to them, the same disproportion prevails abroad between our good and our poor scholars as prevails here. And the villains of the piece seem to be, roughly, the same: money, the speed with which most scholarship-giving institutions develop, their lack of any adequate technique for singling out exceptional students, and their inability to guide or advise those they do select. The picture of the typical recipient of their bounty may cause the reader amusement, for it is skilfully drawn. But we cannot see how the amusement can fail to be grim, when he reflects that too often it is one of these embryo *savants* that colors for life the impression of American scholarship of untraveled but cultivated Europeans. Hardly ever, say the critics, does our traveling scholar or fellow speak the language, whatever it is; hardly ever does he acquire facility enough, to the very end, to follow lectures or laboratory directions with more than mediocre understanding.

THE NEW CROSS OF GOLD

HISTORY not only repeats itself, but is curiously whimsical about its methods of doing so. In 1896 Bryan rallied the agrarian West, which happened then to be short of money, with a rousing address about the "cross of gold." He contended that overemphasis upon monetary standards could be remedied by enthroning a rival demon in the shape of silver. Now, contrary to general rumor, it has not been Franklin D. Roosevelt who has returned in 1932 to the Bryan point of view. Rather it has been, by implication, Mr. Hoover who, in a Des Moines address which promises to possess historical value, has once more brought the problem into the headlines. His attitude is, to be sure, the reverse of Bryan's. The Republican party is committed (he has told us) to a monetary program that will keep a greatly imperiled gold standard from being undermined by Democrats, radicals and reformers. Gold is therefore—to continue a familiar metaphor which we hope will not sound blasphemous and is certainly not intended to be so—a cross which the organization now headed by Mr. Hoover must carry ahead, cautiously and zealously, for the salvation of the people. Indeed the President drew a picture of himself as a man keeping secret the suffering of two weeks during which the nation's gold reserves were dwindling to a point just above those regions in which the mighty dollar would look like a poor relation of the British pound.

What does it all mean? The political implications, at least, are clear. Looking back with pride upon his achievement as the opponent of inflationary measures, it was easy for the President (a) to identify the inflationists with all Democrats, (b) to suggest that while he remained in office there would be no inflation, and (c) to paint in the gaudiest colors imaginable the adventure through which he had passed. No doubt there are some flaws in this argument. To declare that all the leading inflationists have been Democrats is to make an assertion without any basis whatsoever in fact; and to hold that President Hoover or anybody else can ward off inflation if the country really wants it, is gravely to overestimate the importance of the White House. More important, however, is the question whether our reliance upon the gold standard has met such a strain as the President says it did.

Senator Carter Glass, whose knowledge of such

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problems is unquestioned, promptly declared that the emergency did not exist. Nobody in official station in Washington had aired any concern about the gold standard; and the Senator even went on to describe the willingness of the administration to underwrite measures which might have had a very bad effect on the monentary system. It was proposed, he said, to make "eligible for rediscount at the Federal Reserve Banks the millions of dollars of foreign securities which had been unloaded on thousands of interior banks by the high-pressure salesmanship of the great banks which assume the overlordship of our financial structure." What is here involved seems to have been made relatively clear in an able analysis of the situation written for the New York *Times* by Mr. E. V. Bell. Prior to the enactment of the Glass-Steagall Bill, says Mr. Bell, the "free gold" held by the Federal Reserve System had dwindled to only $416,000,000. This situation was not due, however, to a loss of "gold reserves"—i.e., of gold over and above the potential minimum requirements of the system—but to a decrease of the amount of eligible paper held. Since this amount constituted only about 32 percent of the value of the Reserve notes in circulation, an additional gold coverage was required under the law. The situation was accordingly one caused not by a shortage of gold but by a congestion of the normal flow of credit. Why not, some reasoned, help credit by accepting foreign obligations as eligible paper?

The problem of the government, was therefore less one of how to conserve a fatefully necessary gold supply than one of reviving, if possible, the financial activity of the nation. In part the solution was made possible by the Glass-Steagall Bill, which may be said to have rigged out the Federal Reserve System, until then a bit staid, in sport clothes, permitting a greater freedom of movement. There followed the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, perhaps the most revolutionary step ever taken in the history of American capitalism, and now clearly an "experiment" so vast in scope and potentialities that no man of whom we possess knowledge has any real conception of what its future can be. Ex-Senator James A. Reed, speaking at Des Moines, said a number of things we should hesitate to indorse, but the importance of the following part of his address is obvious: "If he [Mr. Hoover] has accomplished anything, it is the establishment of a species of capitalistic Socialism. For I assert that it is as Socialistic in principle to take the money from the people by taxation and loan it and the government credit to assist great banks, trust companies, railroads and other large institutions because they are in distress, as it would be to impound the national wealth to take care of the mass of men and women who are also in distress."

In all truth the endeavor to "pump credit into the arteries of the nation" has meant, as Mr. Hoover himself said, an unparalleled use of government authority. Nevertheless, the idea is not so novel as it may seem. Of course the question is too large to discuss here, and we hope to deal with it more fully in subsequent issues of THE COMMONWEAL. One may note, however, that the principle underlying the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is essentially the same as that which guided American finance in its attitude toward foreign nations in the years following the war. Assuming that Germany could pay off its indebtedness if it were granted abundant capital, the United States investor (with the active encouragement of his government) loaned billions of dollars on collateral most of which was situated in the future. The treatment of Latin-American countries was based on the same rule, as many an owner of bonds has learned to his great sorrow. In short, the use of credit, directly or indirectly supervised by the government, was then conceived of as the great resuscitator of foreign trade. It was also, in a measure, the ground which administration and stock market shared in common. Today it has merely been more efficiently concentrated in Washington, and more directly harnessed to the immediate domestic needs of the nation.

One may then conclude that the convictions of Mr. Hoover's group are these: first, the value of money depends upon the conservation of a large gold supply, and the accumulation of a still larger gold supply; second, the use of money is contingent upon the volume and momentum of its flow into the "arteries of trade." It follows that if the President can be shown eager to act in the light of both these convictions, there is absolutely no reason (in his own philosophy) for supposing him to have been remiss in any way. He is an engineer who looks upon his job mainly as one of generating business electricity out of sound sources of power. That the circuit has been cut off here, there and yonder; that a great deal of the equipment and of the fixtures are out of date, or even useless; that millions of men have no way of getting a chance to tap the power—these things are not of primary importance to a man like Mr. Hoover. Committed to the belief that the electricity, if present, will eventually filter out to everybody, he is humanly speaking deeply touched by distress but philosophically unable to do anything about it.

The way to oppose the President is to declare that the apparatus of distribution must be put into the proper state of repair—that, for example, the energy of money will never reach the farmer whose produce is valueless by reason of an insensate system of agricultural engineering. This opposition will not find its job an easy one. Power is simple, fundamental, producible if the right conditions are maintained. But the man who would fix transmission wires, design new circuits, invent more useful appliances, must be both agile and imaginative. His to contend with is the huge accumulated inertia of the American public. But to his support there will rally, if his work is reasonably planned, all those who apply to the remedying of human distress the familiar formula: Eventually, why not now?

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THE CAMPAIGN LINE-UP

By CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

IN ITS closing weeks the presidential campaign has taken on form and coherency. Definitely the Republicans are not only on the defensive but fighting an uphill and desperate battle. In doing it they have changed their tactics—a thing illustrated everywhere along the battle-line, but in nothing so dramatically as the forcing of President Hoover to the front to make "fighting speeches." It is impossible to resist the feeling that they are fighting in this desperate way, not so much to save this election as to prepare for the four probably turbulent years that lie ahead. The result has been, however this election may result, to present the Republican party as the party of an idea, and the idea is that of what the Republicans themselves will call conservatism and their enemies will call reaction.

What this amounts to is that the question who shall control the Republican party, the liberals or the conservatives, is answered after a quarter of a century of dubiety. It is usual to date the difference to "the Bull Moose split of 1912," but in fact the divergence began years before that. Nominally the party came together again in 1916, but the only difference was that instead of voting for a third party candidate as in 1912 the "progressives" voted direct for Wilson. At least, enough of them did to reëlect him. The issue remained, slightly obscured by the years of "Coolidge prosperity," and now has come to the front and been fought out.

The Progressive Republican leaders are either opposing Hoover's reëlection openly, as with Senator Norris of Nebraska and Senator Johnson of California, or are maintaining an unfriendly silence which comes to the same thing, as with Senator Couzens of Michigan. As Senator Johnson put it in defining his position, "For many years, in the politics of this nation, two distinct political philosophies have constantly clashed."

So far as the Republican party is concerned, the whole tendency of this campaign of "fighting speeches" has been to adopt one of those philosophies and repudiate the other. The result of this will not be fully manifest for several years. The obvious conclusion would be the division between a liberal and a conservative party, but the progressive Republicans do not fully trust the Democrats yet and are sticking to their nominal party label, with the apparent watchword, "Wait and see." For the moment, they go no further than to oppose Hoover either openly or silently.

To a degree, this was evident at the Republican convention, but though the conservatives were in control, they were in no such militant spirit as they have been during the last month of the campaign. The September election in Maine is the starting-point of the change. The discovery that they were on the brink of a precipice had a revolutionary and immediate effect on tactics. Instead of minimizing the Democratic victory in Maine, the Republican leaders accepted it at its full value as a warning of defeat, and the change in methods was made as fast as it could be done. Everywhere their spellbinders forced the fighting, to save Hoover if possible, but if not, then to present a uniform and serried party standing for something and ready to begin operations with the moment of defeat.

All this cannot be arranged and done in a minute, and the heavy cannonading on the Republican side properly dates from ex-President Coolidge's speech in New York on October 11. It was followed the same week by the first of Hoover's "fighting speeches," that at Cleveland, in which he denounced the "lies" that he said had been spread about him. This sort of thing is quite out of character for Hoover. The President does not like to make speeches of any kind, and especially dislikes anything resembling debate or defense. For that matter, Coolidge's speech was in some respects out of character for him, for he is not given to presenting personal eulogies like the one he then gave for Hoover. It is not at all difficult to imagine that these speeches, and those which followed, were the result of conclusions by the Republican "war board" about the sort of campaign that must be waged, and the objects to be kept in view.

The concentration of both parties on the Middle West during the meatiest part of the campaign was due to the evidence that that section, ordinarily Republican, is likely to go for Roosevelt in a block. The conditions in Indiana, Illinois and Ohio are especially parlous, and Michigan has had its own experiences with the hard times which differ in some respects from those in other states, even in Mid-Western states. The Republicans had to make their stiffest fight for the Mid-West, since to let that section go would be equivalent to staying out of the game altogether. It is noticeable that Hoover picked Detroit as the place in which to make his appeal to the country on the business situation.

This was a right-about from the original plan of campaign, according to which Hoover, after his opening speech at Des Moines, was to have confined his personal campaigning to the Northeast. The decision in favor of the change was not reached until near the middle of the month. It was given out that the Republican leaders had found a chance to retake lost territory in the Mid-West, but whether that was the reason or not, the decision was made at a headquarters conference.

It was doubtless also due in part to the Republican

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belief that things do not look so badly for them in the Northeast. At the time these lines are written, the *Literary Digest's* poll indicates that New Jersey and all of New England incline to Hoover, although the poll has plenty of time to change before this article gets into print. One thing is sure, the Republican leaders look with more confidence, or at least with more hope, on the section lying along the North Atlantic coast than on any other except California.

The Democrats do not concede California, and are building considerable hope on the Progressive Republican following of Senator Johnson. It was that following which gave California to Wilson by a very small majority and reëlected him in 1916. The Republican confidence in California rests mostly on the fact that it is a high tariff state. North of California the Pacific coast is not so promising from the Republican standpoint; Washington, especially, is considerably torn up over the hard times question.

Roughly speaking, it may be said that the Republican hopes are built on the East, provided they do not lose more than one Middle Western state. If their calculations on New Jersey are at all well founded, it must be assumed that there is ground for hope for them in New York and, of course, Pennsylvania, because the New Jersey habit of thought and of political action usually resembles that of these two other states. Pennsylvania may as well be left out of the question. If that state should go Democratic in a presidential year, then it would mean such a universal upset that there would be no use in analyzing the particulars of the political revolution by states. There is no special significance in Senator Norris's going to Philadelphia to open his Eastern campaign; he likes to stump Pennsylvania in opposition to the regular Republican organization, and has done it in other years.

Granting, however, that the Republicans may be at their best in the East, they cannot win with that section alone. It is a truism that Wilson was reëlected in 1916 by the Republican slump in California, but California was not the only Republican state that he carried. He carried Ohio and, for that matter, New Hampshire. The block of states that extends from the western border of Pennsylvania to the Mississippi River is in such an extremely shaky condition, from a Republican standpoint, that Hoover's defeat might very well be accomplished in that territory. At the time this is written the defeat of Senator Watson in Indiana and Senator Glenn in Illinois is almost a foregone conclusion. Watson is the Republican Floor Leader in the Senate, and Glenn is the front of Hooverism in Illinois. As for Ohio, the heavy registration in such independent cities as Cleveland and Toledo, both of them so unreliable for Republicanism even when things are going smoothly, is only one of the many ominous signs. Most of the non-partizan political observers who have gone into that state put it down as Democratic.

Nevertheless, Mr. Roosevelt's second trip into this Mid-Western section indicates something less than certainty that the Democrats have it in their bag; and so, to mention only one of several straws, does the application from the Indiana democracy for an enlargement in the number of eminent speakers from the number which had originally been estimated as sufficient. These measures may be precautionary only, but there can hardly be any doubt that the militant Republican hammering on one issue, from President Hoover down, has had its effect on at least some of the voters in those states.

That issue is the steady, concerted attempt to represent the Republican party—necessarily embodied in Hoover as the candidate—as efficient in its efforts to cope with the hard times, and hence as the hope of the immediate future. With this necessarily goes the attempt to portray the Democratic party as indecisive and rudderless. That this is having at least some effect is shown by the concentration of the Democratic argument in the Mid-West on that point, for the purpose of proving the opposite. The speakers in both parties make up their argument from the record; of course, reading a different meaning into the items of that record. This applies both to Hoover's attempts to grapple with the depression and to the line that has been taken by the two parties in Congress, especially in the last year.

One example is Henry Ford's declaration for Hoover, based entirely on the Republican view of this question. Another is the formation in Illinois of an independent pro-Hoover organization of small business men, said to number 10,000, and its reported activity. They are mostly Chicagoans, but are trying to get out the vote—and to change its complexion—down state as well as up. But for that matter, all the Republican hammering is along this one line, and in these late days the Democratic answer is being pretty well confined to the same issue. This has been most noticeably the case since Hoover went into the West with his aggressive defensive.

The change in the battle-line since the two conventions is marked. At that time the overshadowing issue seemed to be prohibition. It was predicted that as the campaign went on, less would be heard of that once overshadowing topic and that the fight would be on the country's financial condition, and this prediction has been verified. Where the argument has been on the question of competency, it has meant competency to handle the hard times. Hoover, for instance, is being charged with incompetency as a President, but when you get down to cases it always means that he has proved his incompetency to deal with the depression. This, too, is what really lies back of every Republican attempt to limn Roosevelt as a lightweight. It is what lies back of every attack on the records of the two parties in Congress, so far as the public attention can be attracted to Congress at all; for, as in every campaign in a presidential year, the popular tongue wags almost wholly over the two candidates for one office, the Presidency.

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CAN WE GO BACK TO THE LAND?

By CHARLES MORROW WILSON

Federal and state authorities concur in noting a trend back to the land. Who is going and what does it mean? In the following paper, Mr. Wilson uses Arkansas as a field of inquiry. There something like a check has been kept on the incoming farm population attracted by cheap land and some opportunity to homestead. Conceding that it is not at all certain whether "our new farmward trend could be justified on the basis of formal economic theory," Mr. Wilson points to the helplessness of this theory to deal with any problem. He believes the agricultural spirit of 1932 has been one "of fighting solvency."—The Editors.

I HAVE been having trouble of late with Herman, my pet skunk. Herman is unable to adapt himself to the surroundings. He eats wieners and meat scraps with hearty directness and basks in a cool den back underneath the bath tub. But even so, he can't fit himself to the times.

For one thing, he craves the Bohemian life—to sleep all day and frolic at night. Unfortunately, there is usually no one about to play with Herman at night. But Herman plays nevertheless, and keeps strictly with formula. He rises on his front paws, pats a dull rhythm, then runs in a circle, then stands on his hands and pats again. The routine begins precisely at bedtime. A shoe smacked against the wall brings from two to five minutes of silence. Nothing more.

One night I took myself to time. "This shoe throwing," I said, "is all wrong. It is ineffectual and childish and harsh. Herman needs a playmate to help him in becoming adapted to his new environment."

Thereupon I got a kitten for Herman to play with, a kindly, frolicsome young cat named Oscar.

The two have gotten to be good friends, but still Oscar wants to play cat games and Herman wants to play skunk games. Oscar comes leaping toward the center of the bathroom. Herman rises on his forepaws, pats a tattoo, then runs in a circle. Oscar sallies forth, tackles Herman playfully, rolls him over on the floor, then retreats coyly and waits to be tackled by Herman. But Herman can't absorb the idea. On being roughed and rolled, he rises again and starts running in concentric circles, while Oscar looks on goggle-eyed and puzzled.

Listening from my work-bench, it occurs to me that the Herman-Oscar dilemma parallels our present problem of land. The bathroom represents the American commonwealth. The circle in which Herman runs is the American town. Herman represents the urban son or urban commerce. Oscar and his tusslings represent the thwackings of current economic necessity. A, Herman of the routine mind, on being tackled by B, the kitten Oscar, continues to run in C, the circle of cities.

Our current back-to-the-land problem is definitely one of adaptation to a new game. The playground we have, in the form of at least 150,000,000 acres of idle farming land, cultivated during the past generation, but now for varying reasons no longer tilled, land left deserted through city drift, bad management or the reality of a waning yeomanry. Yet a nation-wide back-to-the-land move is already definitely headed toward this mighty realm of "marginal" farming land. Our Department of Agriculture believes that 1932 finds at least 6,000,000 more rural Americans than did the census of 1930, a phenomenon indicating a definite return step toward America's original heritage of agriculture.

Now that quotations of Jeffersonian principle and maxims are a standing usance of the day, we might aptly remember that Thomas Jefferson said of farmers: "Cultivators of the earth make the best citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most virtuous and the most independent. They are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests with the most lasting bonds. As long, therefore, as they can find employment in that line, I would not counsel them to be mariners, artizans or anything else."

For the past generation the country has generally overlooked the civic and governmental worth of its waning yeomanry. During the whole of a fat era of avarice, the American humor abounded in all imaginable amours except the love of farming land, an elemental affection from which so much of the strivings and dreams and victories of our race has taken nurture.

This newly-roused landward move carries all the force which may come of national tradition. We are, from ancestral roots, largely a nation of farmers. A century ago fully 85 percent of our citizenry made their living from the land. As men of earth they raised homes and families and governments. Then the decades of Victoria and industrialization saw the rise of cities. Towns sprang from babyhood into hardened manhood—robustious and declamatory—while the farms were left to wait and wane in stoic silence. During the present century our farm roll has dropped from 40,000,000 to 30,000,000 to 27,000,000, leaving our ratio of farmers to townsmen lower than that in various crowded countries of Europe. More lately the machine age has invaded some of the more promising segments of our surviving farm realm, bringing "cash crops," specialized farming, and systems of unnatural and entangling farm credits, all to weigh heavily upon the rural spirit. Farming suffered ridicule, legislative indifference and loss of youth through craving to step from the land to a regency of white collars.

This part of the case is, of course, more general than personal. One can't reasonably expect Oscar Zipp, the plumber with nothing to plumb, or Hiram Jones, the truckless truck driver, to pass up corner movies, deli-

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catessens, and the Great White Way, and trek forth to a remote realm of farms, just to help on with a likely-looking national trend. Nor can one expect that they should change their mode of living at the drop of a hat and lope away to the far hinterlands, just from an *a priori* honing to safeguard the fortunes of the Zipp and Jones offspring a dozen generations from date. Our new farmward trend is essentially a matter of personal decision and of immediate necessity.

What are some of the specific attributes of this prevailing back-to-the-land move?

The answer is not easy to give. About a dozen of our states have inquired into their immediate farmward drifts with considerable care, and a fairly representative base is the 1932 farm population estimate from Arkansas, one of the most rural states in the union, with more than 80 percent of its people making their livings from farms. Arkansas holds agricultural advantages in moderate taxes and abundant cheap and averagely fertile land with aptitudes for a great variety of crops; advantages offset by a prevailing scarcity of city markets and by a partially paralyzing transportation system.

Arkansas's present population is about 1,805,000. Her back-to-the-land move began in 1929, when about 29,000 people came from the towns to the farms. The great drought of 1930 brought a temporary interruption, but in 1931 there was an increase of about 43,000 farmers, and the present farming season finds that number raised to at least 112,000, with over 39,000 more farms under present cultivation than were being worked in 1929. This is an increase of about 11 percent in the number of tilled farms and of about 9 percent in the total of active farmers.

A little more than half of Arkansas's crop of neophyte farmers are this season cultivating land which was not being worked in 1930. Less than 5 percent of them are working as field hands. About 30 percent are renting land; 7 percent are working land rent-free or practically so; about 15 percent are homesteading, either upon federal or state-owned domain; and the rest have either bought land outright or have undertaken its purchase.

The heaviest inflow of new farming population has come into the hill country or forest lands, or along the valleys of remote rivers. Rice and cotton areas, and the rich alluvial districts adjoining the major rivers, are taking in relatively few immigrants, for here considerable capital is needed to undertake farming. Want of capital is a dominant humor of our new generation of landmen.

No more than one-fourth of these neophyte farmers come from Arkansas. The majority of them are from cities and industrial centers of neighboring states; factory and professional people bereft of their jobs and craving refuge with mother earth. The oil industries centering about Tulsa, the automobile plants of Detroit, the rubber industries of Akron, Midwestern coal and mining areas, are heavy contributors to this pertinent chapter in the back-to-the-land trend. The returners are largely of farming heritage, and had left the land for the glamor and promise of towns and generous pay.

Dependent principally upon their own bodies for man-power, these returning frontiersmen of 1932 have generally lost all craving for great holdings. Their average tillable acquisition is not more than twenty-three acres, roughly one-third of the normal mean acreage of these parts. They are planting crops with the underlying idea of self-sufficiency. "Cash crops," such as cotton, rice and tobacco, they are prone to neglect. About a third of their tilled acreage goes to corn; the rest to various food and feed crops, to garden truck, fruits, potatoes, livestock pasture, cane, forage, small grain and hay.

I have interviewed a good number of these newcomers, asking them how long they intend to stay upon their newly taken holdings. The answers are variable: "Until we can make a go of it." "Until conditions get a lot better in towns and give fair promise of staying that way."

A good portion see no eminent reason why they should leave the land. Others plan to stay on until the time comes to educate their children. Others say frankly that their sojourn landward, launched in emergency, is being waged as an experiment and as an immediate defense against joblessness. I have found these newly established tillers of the land generally a high-hearted and spontaneous sort, averagely able-bodied and intelligent, buckling to their new undertaking with the resourcefulness and hope typical of the invincible American frontier.

A few are admittedly new to farming, and couldn't, on a bet, tell a hamstring from a singletree. Some fall definitely into the category of farming gypsies, sons and daughters of open trails and closed jobs, who have wandered forth to pick up a piece of land and so tether themselves to the apron-strings of Dame Nature and to her benevolent possibilities of square meals. And withal its inevitable dealing of pathos and disappointment, their move stands for a new and not unworthy chapter in the magnificent chronicle of American pioneering.

That our new farmward trend could be justified on the ground of formal economic theory is not at all certain. But for the matter of that, formal economic theory is become toothless and flabby with verbosity and individual egos, with the inevitable mustiness of stale academies. For three years past it has baffled, misconstrued and misled. Gospel economies have missed their marks with all the consistent eccentricity of a poilu armed with a French regulation rifle. Its hits generally have been accidental; its misses painfully deliberate and overwhelming in frequency—significant principally as a graphic proof that Mother Nature hasn't forgotten how to discipline and frustrate her would-be bright sons.

"Food," says the maestro of the economic text-book,

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"can be produced on large-scale organized farms at far less cost than it can be raised on cheap, marginal land —the type most likely to be taken by the back-to-the-land enthusiast."

This, for the sake of space, I may grant as a plausible theory. But there can be no good denying that the tillage of unoccupied land offers advantages, current and real as the fact that at least ten million working Americans now have no work. This landward trek gives tangible and immediate employment, provides shelter and subsistence, and brings in some measure of money return, even if that measure be slight. And the real force of our prevailing back-to-the-land move lies not only in its ability to effect corporeal benefit, but also in its resources for bolstering morale. The earth still holds her age-old prowess for restoring strength to him who touches her in his struggle against the powers which threaten to overcome him. Along with subsistence of body, she still offers an equally important subsistence of spirit to at least nine out of ten of those who seek for it.

If the essence of the current back-to-the-land move is one of emergency, it may likewise be pointed out that various other great farmward moves in our nation's history have been of a similar origin. A doldrum in foreign trade, current during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, brought to the newly acquired Louisiana Territory one of the greatest landward migrations in our history. The business crashes following the Civil War, and the marked landward trend which followed the lean times of 1907, were all, in their turn, forced by upheavals and downfalls in industry and in foreign commerce.

Sundry farming areas of our country now carry tremendous acreages of marginal land, farmable tracts which in a favorable season can make fair returns on a given outlay of labor. Evidence stands that a substantial share of the present back-to-the-land move is directed toward such areas. And occupancy of marginal land does not, by any means, spell foreordained defeat for these neophyte farmers, whose first interest lies in wresting a living from the earth rather than in the acquisition of wealth or in the extension of patriarchal boundaries.

In the great majority of instances, land fertility can be built up or degraded by cropping. Just as millions of acres of marginal lands in the past have been built into profitable farming sites, so have mighty commonwealths of farming lands, originally rich, been brought within a generation's time into the category of marginal land, through the neglect and the greed of tenants.

Taxes present one of the most serious obstacles in the way of the current landward move. Now that the price range for farm produce is close to its mark of an even century ago, tax levies on farm properties are rarely ever less than four times their rate of a century ago. Where the farming frontiersman could settle his tax obligations with the returns from an acre of crops, the contemporary frontiersman must give over approximately four acres.

But land taxation is variable as April weather. In some states vast stretches of cheap and easily available farming lands are permanently damned by exhorbitant road or school responsibilities and other monstrosities in special levies. To the Department of Agriculture's standing admonition that all land-takers should investigate in advance the soil and season possibilities of their proposed farm site, might be added the obvious suggestion that careful investigation of tax problems and prospects of the land should be studied with equal care, not only from a standpoint of specific millage rate, but also the amount of bonded debt, the interest rate and market value of the bonds for which the proposed site is held responsible.

For taxes are a recurring and ominous overhead. They descend with all the inevitable regularity of the seasons, and neither tears nor death nor failure can overcome them. But in comparison with municipal tax dilemmas, persual of any authentic tax digest shows the farms played over by a recurring parade of rainbows. Speaking broadly for all the nation, the tax ratio on farming property varies from 35 to 40 percent of the combined levies on equal assessments in towns and cities of 5,000 and over. In any case, the hazard of taxation is not peculiar to the farmward venture, and the farmer is less shackled than is his brother of the town.

Endurance prospects for the farmward move are materially bettered by prospects of practical compromise. Several countries of Europe and a few of our own states have launched officially directed drives to encourage their marginal industrial workers in making at least part of their living from small-scale farming. In the outskirts of various continental cities one sees thousands of tiny garden plots worked by townsmen as a means to keep in touch with mother earth and incidentally help out the family commissary. War-ridden Belgium organized Du Coin de Terre, a national league to encourage small-scale farming among city people. In the latter years of the war at least 107,000 city families of Belgium cultivated gardens, and so were able to supply themselves with foodstuffs not otherwise procurable. This league continues to flourish, and its precedence has gained extensive foothold in a score of nations—a definite step at compromise between city and farming resources.

Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt has added further impetus to the trend in this country through his ambitious drive to "take industry to the country," by establishing industries in properly zoned and supervised farming areas where factory and office workers may better their waning wages with returns from small-scale farming. Available compromise is apt to furnish a first-rate groundwork for endurance.

Our current landward migration is definitely past the stage of being a temporary condition. Lady Luck has lately turned from her favored cities to make a first

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mincing step toward her long-neglected realm of farms. The year 1930 dealt an excessively bad farming season along with slim pickings for the cities and industries. Its agricultural production in the United States as a whole was 37 percent below normal, and thirteen states were sorely plagued by blighting drought. But 1931 was a first-rate farming year, so good in fact that its increase in crops offset the sagging prices of the preceding year for a livable gain, whereas the year dealt little but continued misery to cities and industries. The increase in farms and farmers gives eye-opening proof that our prevailing landward trend is materially more than a shifting fad.

The current year, with all its batterings from direful prophets shows a definite spirit of agricultural solvency. While sundry other enterprises have either folded cards or chosen to mark time, the agricultural spirit of 1932 is one of fighting solvency.

Moreover going back to the land has pertinent advantages in modernity. State highway programs, supported by federal road aid, have brought, and in a good portion of cases paid for, improved roads in nearly every county of these United States, a vast productive improvement over the wilderness trails followed by our farming forefathers of a century or even half-a-century ago. Country schools have gained tremendously during the past decade; the one-room schoolhouse of lyric quaintness has largely been replaced by more competent consolidated schools. Rural health centers, marketing associations, county agricultural agents and home demonstrating agents are doing their parts to aid the nation's farm lands in the acquisition of a new farm population.

Immediate employment, home production of basic food requisites, with its resulting savings in transportation, storage and middleman's profits, resources in rent economy, independence of bosses and man-made routine are among the plainer advantages of our prevailing landward migration. In its permanence there is an even greater promise—the rebuilding, in America, of a mighty landed yeomanry, a peace-abiding gentry whose mind and spirits may absorb the sweetness and mellowness of good earth, an attitude casually trite but more than casually true.

WON THROUGH

By C. C. MARTINDALE

WHY AM I glad that THE COMMONWEAL has won through? (For we may trust that it has done so.) Because I think it is true to its name, which implies, that it seeks the well-being of the mass of the people, and provides what most people will be the better for getting.

I see regularly five Catholic magazines, and, irregularly, some non-Catholic magazines, from the United States. I won't draw comparisons between the Catholic ones. But I am sure that each and all of them provide more healthy stuff than all and any of the others do. More of what the "common" man needs, and will thrive on. And in certain ways THE COMMONWEAL does this especially well.

It does so, because though it does not provide food suited to quite all appetites (it does not provide what the English *Stella Maris* or *Messenger* or parish magazines do) it provides what non-parochial, or rather not-only-parochial, not-exclusively-pious, readers are likely to need. The English *Messenger* (a very good magazine indeed) feels no need to criticize plays or novels. But plays and novels exist, and are seen or read by non-hermit Catholics: THE COMMONWEAL ought to notice them and discuss them from the ethical and also the literary point of view, and it does so. I always read that part.

It does so, because among "common" men are those who, at one extreme, want to know about economics, and others who want to know about poetry. I would not—save creaking in every joint with boredom—read the English *Spectator* about European economic problems; but I am very interested in what THE COMMONWEAL thinks of them (of course, because it does not regard them just as European, but as human). But also I observe that in the whole world it is the only bulletin that has paid adequate attention to Miss Eileen Duggan, that New Zealand poetess whose almost-every poem shows that her soul is in sympathy, New Zealandwise, with God.

> Said Australia to Christ—youngest princess at the Throne—
> "Sire, my little continent . . . let it be Your altar-stone!"

She wrote that before the Sydney Eucharistic Congress. I read it, I think, on board the Marama, as I sailed with broken and infected skull from Auckland to Australia. I knew she had touched authentic stuff. I tried to get it across in England, and failed to do so. THE COMMONWEAL gets Miss Eileen Duggan across.

Many, perhaps, will remember the times when THE COMMONWEAL invited others than Catholics to give their opinions about Catholics, and to do so frankly, so that we might have at least the chance of seeing ourselves as others see us. They were able to pass much more useful criticisms than we generally do on ourselves. For we certainly do criticize! We spend an enormous part of our life in grumbling about ourselves and our shortcomings. At least we do in England. . . . And pulpits are continually full of denunciations, especially during missions. "Ah, *I* let 'em know what I thought of them, the slackers!" Blackthorn

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method, quite valueless today. But it is most invigorating as well as enlightening to hear people who don't believe in us, or don't like us, tell us why they don't.

I remember two excellent evenings at Oxford, when various young men informed a Catholic society (which had invited them to do so) what they objected to in Catholicism, so far as they had encountered it. The objections were various. I remember only one, made by a Jew: "Just when you Catholics are becoming really interesting, you collapse upon your cushion, 'The Church says. . . .' You have that cushion; I have nothing but a spur. . . ." It was pathetic, because he derived more suffering than stimulus from his spur. But we learned a lot; and were braced, not disheartened. A frequent remark, upon Catholic lips, was: "I never thought they looked at things like that. I didn't know they felt like that about us!" The preliminary to mutual understanding had been accomplished.

Some people have called this "washing dirty linen in public." But we have never been so public as the Hebrew prophets or as Saint Paul (when writing, for example, to the Corinthians); and maybe the linen they so drastically rinsed was dirtier than ours is. But I have sometimes thought that just as people, who object to confession, ask if it's not enough to confess one's sins to God, and then do not confess them even to Him, so we, if we don't make public acknowledgment, are quite likely not so much as to examine our consciences, let alone examine methods of self-cure. For, if there's nothing to cure, why say the Confiteor, which we do, very publicly indeed! Yes, even priests, to whom the devout Irish like to attach the epithet "holy," vigorously affirm, in the first person singular, that they have sinned by their own grave fault. Individuals are not now asked to specify their offenses publicly; but perhaps what is collective, faults proper to the community, ought to be publicly specified, so that a public conscience may be formed about them, and a collective cure begun. And THE COMMONWEAL, if true to its name, ought to be able to help toward that, and does. It is neither a cloyingly complacent Catholic magazine, nor a blatantly denunciatory one, nor an ineffectually grumbling one.

THE COMMONWEAL, moreover, seems to me to have made a valiant effort to contemplate the world and to judge it religiously indeed but not only "ecclesiastically." I mean that in two senses—first, it is possible to look at a thing, which one knows to contain all sorts of elements, yet so as to watch and assess one element only in it, as a doctor might regard a human body purely from the point of view of health or non-health, and as an artist and a mechanic would certainly "see" an engine quite divergently. Hence one might isolate the element of "parishioner," or "Knight of St. Columba," in a man, and assess him accordingly, and be quite wrong in one's general estimate. Then, priests may run a special danger herein, because average men—even the best of them, and perhaps they especially—do adopt a different way of talking, even to the tone of their voice, when in the company of ecclesiastics; so do warders in a gaol, or nurses in hospitals, or even Reverend Mothers in convents, vary their mode of addressing their subordinates (prisoners, patients, Sisters) when a superior officer, or visitor, is present. It indicates no hypocrisy; but it may make reality harder to come by. Royalty used to be brought up very strictly, but hardly ever did it hear the truth. Hence its periodic mania for incognito: but even then there was usually a gentleman or a lady-in-waiting or a detective in the offing.

We are grateful to THE COMMONWEAL and are glad that its existence seems safe, because it really does try to get at reality—the real, not "realism," which is a caricature like all other isms. It doesn't always succeed, but what human thing does? It has its academic pages, its padding, its sometimes very affected verses. But we are so horrified by the sight of the world that literally nothing seems able to disillusionize or to extricate from its shroud upon shroud of stifling lies—that we welcome anything that succeeds even a little way. Art, I suppose, has been making an effort to do so: contempt for the "pretty" has itself by now become an element in a new jargon. Refusal to make poetry rhyme, or scan; to begin lines of verses with capital letters; to use any but straight lines when building a house—all this was, I suppose, a protest, though by now it is a new mass of tricks and falsity. But no one has enabled us to see through money, position and power, nationalist and racialist or even territorial ambition; and no one ever will, unless Catholics become truly possessed by their faith and determined to transmit it. Will that end in wholesale crucifixion, since today mass-destruction is easier, in some sense, than it was? I should not wonder. I would not be surprised to be told that our successors will see the Church wandering in some Oriental exile, but poor indeed and chaste, and obedient in all her members to the Spirit of her Lord.

THE COMMONWEAL therefore must survive and develop, as a lay Catholic journal, certainly not condescending to the vulgarity of anti-clericalism, which it has never done, but able to cater for lay readers by no means necessarily Catholic; able to be sincerely interested in anything that can interest anyone, without artificiality, such as trying to show that it is thus interested, but just being so; able to write as it should because plenty of its contributors hear men talk as they do; and able to sympathize just because it is so sure of its Catholic dogma and its Catholic code. Only the unsure need fear encounters with what is alien to them —they and they only can feel: "We might totter, our perch may be insecure." They therefore have to restrict themselves to some small safe group, and would have to refrain from even trying to meet (let alone, help) the mass of men. Such people would not fit in with the idea implied in either of the two halves of THE COMMONWEAL's name.

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THE RETURN OF BERGSON

By PIERRE LINN

FOR MORE than twenty years the French scientific world has awaited the crowning effort of Henri Bergson: a book revealing his ideas on morals and religion. And at last, in spite of Bergson's ill health, the book has appeared. It is entitled "The Two Sources of Morals and Religion," and merits long and technical discussion. But within the limit of these pages it is possible only to remark how Bergson's ideas are a fairly good expression of the present state of opinion in France. If the word metaphysics is taken to mean, not the science nor a complicated system of concepts, but the tendency of a man or a nation to give a unity to their actions, then France today can be said to have a metaphysics, and this book helps us to grasp what it is.

For years past, French official sociology, inspired by rationalism, which is in France a form of national philosophy, has rejected all idea of the nature of things and made frantic efforts to build up a theory of society on purely psychological notions. Bergson has no difficulty in recognizing that society is a natural fact; but he at once makes a cardinal distinction. The society which man owes to nature is what he calls the "closed society." This he defines as the society

> whose members hold together, professing deep indifference toward the rest of mankind, are always ready to attack or to defend themselves, in a word, are constrained to maintain a fighting attitude.

The origin of this notion is obviously biological, and Bergson does not hesitate to say that human society, in so far as it is closed, is strictly comparable to the societies of ants and bees which are based solely on instinct. But whereas the ordinary materialist is usually content with this assertion, Bergson innovates by opening up the way to the conquest of a plane above primitive biologism. Animal society cannot be other than closed. Man, on the contrary, is capable of outgrowing closed societies and of attaining "open society," that is, a form which "in principle tends to embrace the whole of mankind." The difference between the closed and open types of society is not a matter of quantity, as if open society could be established through the addition of several closed ones. Open society is essentially trans-biological. Its realization does not depend on nature but on the action of privileged individuals (who can be termed "heroes") borne along by intuition beyond the sphere of intelligence. The order of the closed society is derived from obligation, that of the open society from aspiration. There is no straight line from the closed to the open, but a succession of efforts; there is no preformed ideal, but a tendency which Bergson looks upon as mystical. The use of this word "mystical" to designate an all important conclusion reached by totally secular thought with a meaning which, while not acceptable, is at least within the range of discussion for a Catholic, is quite a novel thing in rationalistic France. It will therefore be worth our while to inquire how Bergson reaches his conception of mystics.

Bergson's ideas are characterized by the meaning he attaches to the three terms, "instinct," "intelligence," "intuition," and by the connection existing between the activities which this trilogy designates. Animals act by instinct. Man is rooted in animality and his activity is also partly instinctive; but, being free and intelligent, he can rise above instinct and create new forms. Nevertheless, Bergson considers that matter is the natural and sole object of the activity of the intelligence. The question is, therefore, how man may divert his activity from matter and turn it toward spiritual realities. This, for Bergson, is only possible through the exercise of a particular kind of activity called "intuition." Intuitive thought, which can best be psychologically described by its analogy with sympathy, is the means by which man penetrates the true order of the world and attains communion with life. Only through this communion does man enter the spiritual domain.

It must be queried whether this passage from one kind of activity to another is voluntary and deliberate. As Bergson puts it, intuition intervenes specifically to solve conflicts between the instinct and the intelligence. For instance, instinctive societies are given by nature; Bergson considers that within these societies, the action of intelligence is disruptive, as it leads to egoism. This conflict is solved by the intervention of privileged individuals who incorporate intuition and not only conceal the misdoings of intelligence but bring to man an aspiration toward open society. All of Bergson's constructions are of this type: a conflict arises between instinct and intelligence, which is solved by intuition. And the exercise of pure intuition is identified by Bergson with mystic life. He says:

> It cannot be doubted that the passage from the closed to the open society must be ascribed to Christianity. . . . But its historical realization has been a very slow process. Eighteen centuries elapsed before the Rights of Man were proclaimed by the Puritans of America, closely followed by men of the French Revolution.

Democracy he considers to be the most perfect of political systems:

> Of all the political conceptions it is the most remote from nature; it is the only one which, at least as far as intentions go, transcends the conditions of the closed society.

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From the viewpoint of French political philosophy, the originality here does not lie in the connection, under the same principle, of Christianity and democracy, as it is the most current theme of polemics to oppose the Church and Christianity and to claim for democracy the merit of having realized the Christian ideals. Bergson, who makes no mention of the Church, indulges in the following simplification:

> It may be said that the essence of democracy is evangelical and that its driving power is love.

The difference between Bergson and the official philosophers of French democracy is that the latter consider democratic institutions as essentially rationalistic: democracy is the political form brought to maturity by progress, which is itself the diffusion of reason throughout history. On the contrary, Bergson clearly identifies democracy with a mystical form of life, which necessarily must be situated beyond any rationalistic order. It is in the name of reason that French democratic politicians attack the Church, whereas Bergson does not touch on this point but may be assumed to consider the Church as a closed society and, consequently, as not justifying the rationalist demand for its unconditional suppression. This means, sociologically speaking, tolerance succeeding persecution, which corresponds fairly well to the shifting of the religious question in France within the last twenty years. When it first appeared on the political stage, the republic encountered not the opposition of the Church or of the Catholics as such, but that of the old aristocracies whose personal political creeds were identified with the Church by their adversaries as well as by themselves. It is well known that Rome, on the contrary, spared no effort to draw a line between Catholic politics and the politics of the Catholics. Today the lessons of Leo XIII are quite generally understood. Although a certain traditional anti-clericalism still remains active, the exact force and depth of which cannot be accurately measured, the situation has changed, and Bergson's ideas on the capital importance of Christianity and the implicit legitimacy of the Church are a very significant expression of this change.

Bergson believes that the conditions of the closed society, "self-sufficiency, cohesion, hierarchy, absolute authority of the chief," are as many germs of war. The genesis of war is thus very simple. The existence of a plurality of closed societies makes conflicts inevitable, if only with a view to the possession of implements or of natural riches. This leads Bergson to say that

> the origin of war lies in property, either individual or collective, and as the structure of mankind predestines it to the possession of property, war is a natural phenomenon.

This again carries us pretty far away from French official ideology which teaches that the fundamental causes of war are the passions of the great and the ignorance of the people. War can consequently be abolished by surpressing the great and educating the people: enlightened mankind will then be delivered from its curse. But, here, one must be careful to remember the exact meaning of the word "natural" as applied to war, and it must be recalled that Bergson sees in democracy that political conception which is remotest from nature. Thus Bergson rejoins in his way the democratic pacifism reigning in France. But, as in the case of the basis of democracy, a difference still remains between the two as to the best means of liberation. Democrats of the official type consider that reason suffices and that it is only a question of diffusing it, whereas Bergson believes that war can only be made a thing of the past in so far as man realizes open society, which, in turn, depends not upon reason but upon intuition. Thus, in the final analysis, the suppression of war can only result from a mystical uplifting, a purely spiritual process. To quote Joseph de Maistre:

> The only means to keep down the scourge of war is to repress the disorders which bring forth this terrible purification.

But de Maistre's ideas reflected the Catholic order of the world in which original sin and redemption are rather more substantial realities than, for instance, the League of Nations, of which Bergson declares himself a thorough admirer:

> Like all great optimists, the founders of the League of Nations commenced by taking for granted that the problem of war was capable of solution.

This problem is so very momentous, so pressing, that Bergson feels obliged to examine it at some length. He says:

> The last war and those that may be visualized for the future are intimately bound up with the industrial character of our civilization.

He justifies this assertion by saying that, in the beginning, the nations were organized on the agricultural type, but as population increased, part of the people were obliged to turn to industry for their livelihood. Now, industry—and hence the working class—depends in a greater or lesser degree upon other nations.

> If other nations refuse to buy their products or cease to supply them the means of manufacturing them, those depending on industry are condemned to starve, unless they resolve to go and get what they need. War is the result.

Thus the main causes of war may be considered to be: the increase of population, the loss of selling markets, the deprivation of fuel and raw materials. Any international organization that aims at abolishing war should therefore strive either to eliminate these causes or to attenuate their effects.

That such remedies are to be found in the most current type of literature would be readily conceded by Bergson, who, however, is not satisfied with them. Of course, painstaking correction of every one of these causes is necessary, and every effort must be made to prevent any development within our civilization that

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may lead to war. But Bergson is concerned to find a more direct way to the same goal. If it is true that the germs of war are carried by industrial evolution, the philosopher must concentrate upon this industrial character of our present-day world and inquire into the deeper nature of this evolution.

To start with, Bergson recalls the law of pendular alternation which may be induced from the commonest experience of history. Everyone has observed how a certain tendency appears, counteracts the opposite tendency and takes its place. But the ebb gives place to the flow, and the tendency previously checked reaffirms itself. The reason for this alternative is to be found in the biological character of human societies. It is proper to the *élan vital* to develop on several divergent lines struggling with one another. But here the struggle is only the superficial aspect of progress. This law of alternation is evident in modern industrial effort.

The extraordinary search for the possessions of the earth which characterizes our time, is a reaction—an extreme reaction—against the opposite tendency. The middle ages were dominated by the ascetic ideal, which meant for everyone a lack of comfort which is nothing short of surprising today. Thus if it is true that there is "oscillation and progress, progress by oscillation," after the ever-increasing complexity of our life, there should be a turn in the direction of simplicity. This change is plausible if one recalls man's efforts in the past to satisfy wants which now appear negligible.

> The courage, the energy and the spirit of adventure which led accidentally to the discovery of America, were essentially devoted to the pursuit of ginger, cloves, pepper and cinnamon.

In our day the possession of a motor-car is for many men the supreme ambition, but it is possible that, within a short time, the passion for motor-cars will subside. The case of the motor-car is particularly interesting because those who claim that our material wants can only continue to increase are moved by the belief that "no reason can be seen why mankind should abandon the path of mechanical invention." But Bergson considers that such reasons do exist, as, in reality, it is not the spirit of invention which suscitates artificial wants, but, inversely, "science has given what was asked of her and she has not taken in this case the initiative." The submission of man to the machine is illusory; it is only a psychological fact which leaves human liberty untouched and only opposes in a material way the organization of machine-ism. Real order would come

> if agriculture, which satisfies the elementary wants of man, dominated the other parts of economic life; in any case, agriculture should be the most important care of industry itself.

As things stand today it must be conceded that machine-ism has wantonly encouraged artificial wants, incited people to luxury, favored the towns at the expense of the countryside, increased the distance between the employer and the workman, between capital and labor; but all these effects can be corrected.

> Humanity should undertake to simplify its life with the same frantic determination it applied to complicating it.

If, however, we have come to a situation where millions of men have not enough food to satisfy their hunger, in the midst of a world in which, within a century, the means of production have probably been increased a hundredfold, is it not because, at the very start, mechanical development suffered a deviation?

Bergson offers the following explanation. Historically, one notes a coincidence between the appearance of machine-ism and the first aspirations toward democracy. But these, as noted, are the signs of the passage from the closed society to the open in the political order and therefore reflect a spiritual progress of mankind. In this connection, machine-ism could originally have been the outcome of an effort to liberate man from the bondage of material life. Thus "mystics call for mechanism." What happened in reality was that the last three centuries only brought "the greatest material success known to man on this planet." In this body, grown beyond all measure, the soul remained as it was, and is now unable to fill the body, and too weak to direct it. It has thus come about that it is "mechanism which needs mystics."

Here Bergson takes up again an idea the broad lines of which he had already indicated in a lecture delivered before the London Society for Psychical Research in 1913. At that time he had already asked himself what would have happened if modern science, instead of starting out from mathematics and turning in the direction of mechanics, astronomy, physics and chemistry and concentrating its efforts on the study of matter, had started out by considering the mind; if, in other words, Kepler, Galileo and Newton had been psychologists. Bergson thought, and still maintains, that it is not to be regretted that the modern effort did not commence with the science of the mind. Such a science would never have reached by itself the accuracy and veracity as to proofs which have spread from geometry to physics, chemistry and biology, only to rebound to the mind. Taken from another angle, this development has not been without prejudice for the science of mind which came so late. Our present civilization is precarious: man has acquired most admirable instruments, both material and intellectual, and the question is how to apply them to man himself. Bergson believes that psychical science, in so far as it is already a science, is the way humanity should now take. It is a new world to be explored. Bergson remarks that the progress of psychical science

> could convert into a living and effectual reality the belief in a beyond which seems to be present in most men, but remains as often as not purely verbal, abstract and ineffectual. . . . As a matter of fact, if we were absolutely sure of surviving, we could think of nothing else.

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Whereas this is the high road before humanity, it is possible that it will stop to circumvent, one by one, the obstacles which nature sets against our civilization.

> But humanity must make its choice between merely living and making the necessary effort to permit the universe to accomplish its essential function—to make gods.

With these words the book concludes. Though marked by errors so apparent that it is unnecessary to expose them in detail to the Catholic reader, it represents a serious effort to throw some light upon the highest question with which man is concerned. Nowhere does Bergson touch upon the Catholic answers to these questions, and this can be explained, in line with his own method of thought, by a deviation at the very outset of the inquiry. His theory of intelligence, taken as operating only on matter, leads him very consistently to consider Catholic realism as an illusion which covers the whole doctrine of the Church. It is on this point that a thorough critique of Bergson's ideas on morals and religion should bear. This, however, was not my purpose in the present article. It was only my intention to outline Bergson's principal ideas as a very characteristic manifestation of the French mind, with particular reference to the distance which lies between the positions taken by Bergson and those of French traditional rationalism. If one considers the social and political consequences of Bergsonism, they quite accurately represent the philosophy of any French government of the present thirties. Democracy is invested with a sublime mission: thanks to democracy, humanity will come to know itself and attain its fundamental fraternity. Religion is a possible but not an actual thing, and therefore both tolerance and persecution of the Church are justified. From machine-ism come many evils, but it can be made to serve the good. Without entering into a philosophical discussion, if one looks for the dominating factor in Bergson's ideas, one finds the necessity, inherent in every idea as to man which resolves itself entirely within this life, of ending in complete optimism. There is also a Catholic optimism, but it is a grace obtained by the death, upon the Cross, of Jesus, Son of God, God Himself, "et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos."

CHANGES IN NATIONAL OUTLOOK

By BOYD-CARPENTER

IN 1880, the faculty of political science of Columbia University came into existence through the efforts of the late John William Burgess, to whom much of the recent fruition in development and knowledge is so justly due. Indeed, the mere narration of the names of those who have labored, and those who still labor, within Columbia University, in the field of social and political science, indicate plainly a record of which any nation or university might be proud. But, if any period be taken for purposes of examining and testing tendencies and developments within colleges and universities, it is fairly safe to predict that future students in research work will undubitably point to the three decades ending 1940, as those during which fundamental courses of political and social sciences were remolded and revivified, both as regards the presentation of material and the treatment of the enlarged perspective.

The faculty of political science at Columbia University and the officials of the World Peace Foundation in 1931 published volumes dealing with the changes produced, concerning which latter volume Professor James T. Shotwell writes:

> Today, judging from the data assembled and carefully edited and scrutinized, there are over 3,700 semester courses in undergraduate instruction dealing with international affairs in some of their multiform aspects; over 13,000 semester hours of weekly instruction for half a year undergraduate classroom work or their equivalent, are devoted to this new orientation of American economic, cultural and political life.

Great as this change has been, on the generations which have been leaving colleges and universities in the past ten years (1920-1930), provided certain definite and precise alterations are made, the effects will be vastly greater in the succeeding decades.

As regards books dealing with these changes, undoubtedly that by the World Peace Foundation on the courses upon "International Affairs within American Education Institutions" is the most fascinating. No peculiar mental attitude is indicated throughout its pages. The record is arranged alphabetically, with a comparative analysis by colleges of the areas of the world covered by the courses; after which comes a classification of courses by subjects; all these set out with skill and compactness.

There are gaps which should have been more plainly indicated, among which graduate courses and research opportunities have not been summarized like those offered to the undergraduates. Again, there should have been more emphasis laid upon those institutions in which special facilities are found for studying the problems of international affairs, or where special schools have been brought into existence for the purpose of training students for commercial life abroad, or for representing American interests in foreign lands.

Undue stressing of the opportunity for study without concurrently indicating the chances for employment in foreign commerce or under the American government constitute a danger—as there are other dangers in the matter of personnel and books. Granted that the study of international affairs is to find a place in college and

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university curriculum, with credits for a degree, it must not be assumed that simply reading the history of another country or of continents, will, in reality, place the problems in their entirety before students.

This change in the curriculum demands consequential developments, among which are that foreign languages must be taught so that the student can read, write and speak a language within a reasonable time and be understood when abroad. Secondly, it should be a rule that on each faculty there should be persons in the key positions who really have lived abroad, been in contact with the residents, imbibed some of the atmosphere, really understand the people whose history, literature, habits and customs and economic and cultural background they are seeking to present. Thirdly, there should be a distinct appreciation of the fundamental facts that Asia is not Europe, and that America is not Africa, so that persons, teaching Asiatic history, art, religion, literature, should not attempt to sandwich these as a shadowy outline in a general course of international relations. It should be realized that the international relations of Europe, or Asia, or America, each singly constitute more than a lifetime study for any one person; possibly, it is for this reason that Departments of Foreign Affairs of most governments are divided into sections, each with a divisional chief responsible for facts, movements, tendencies, documents.

It is essential that there should be a frank abandonment of the old idea that anyone can teach African or Asiatic or Siberian history, or, indeed, all of them at one time. This leads directly to the question of text-books. Certain people still hug the delusion that just as any person was thought to be able to teach history or legal affairs, so anyone today can write a text-book on history or international relations. This mental attitude has only to be faced to indicate its absurdity. Compact compilation is easy, especially of such matters as legal documents of one's own country, because this necessitates no knowledge of ancient or foreign languages. Even an epitome of the legal aspects of treaties between America and Japan, or Cuba and America, is possible. But history does not consist of a long list of legal documents, any more than life consists of obedience to legal technicalities.

As men and women are not bound successfully to each other by legal documents, so also nations are not really bound to each other by treaties and conventions. The long list of treaties of peace, made to end war, illustrate the vanity of human wishes, that tried so unsuccessfully down the centuries to usher in the reign of law. In Europe marriage contracts preceded the wedding ceremony, but these and the ceremony did not then prevent the subsequent separation and the divorce, any more than they do today. Our law courts are filled with records of divorce, of actions for breach of contract. The glorious uncertainty of law is adequately matched by the glorious uncertainty of human nature. The very restlessness of human life within each family, or each state, finds its counterpart in the restlessness between nations, concerning their trade, their shipping, their rights. All these can be described, but as they change perpetually, they serve to indicate the impossibility of producing an accurate and up-to-date volume on international affairs as a whole or on any particular area.

Any text-book on humanity and its changes, whether political, economic or geographic, is rendered more and more doubtful in value, since science by shattering distance has destroyed isolation; while humanity being what it is, it is increasingly difficult for such types of books to escape the charge of favoritism on the one side or direct propagandism on the other. Books are necessary, of course, but no one book can cover the whole field.

The day of old-fashioned text-books is dead. The better way to educate students in international affairs and relations is by seminars, at which any problem can be examined geographically, and then economically, and the political viewpoint of each nation having interests therein can be taken up, to ascertain what rights each interested nation may really possess. Each student should be urged to take a personal interest to the extent of writing a paper for presentation to the seminar, on one of these aspects.

This system eliminates the text-book covering all angles, and introduces the special studies, geographic, climatic, economic, sociological, political, explaining to the student that the divisions of knowledge are only a plan to aid him to grasp the unity of life and nature.

Undoubtedly, the Columbia faculty of political science and the World Peace Foundation are doing good work in their day and age. Possibly the restudying of our national mind and national position may, when viewed from an international aspect, lead to a widening of vision which will set our eyes upon the proportional position which each nation occupies in a conspectus of the world as a whole, and make us all realize that a more perfect understanding of each other's, as well as each nation's, problems, may usher in an era of completer knowledge and understanding sympathy.

All Saints' Day

Some lofty souls are so aflame with love,
Consuming all impurity by fire,
They rise by sheer attractions ever higher
Unto the Throne of Majesty above.
And some there are who seek for shame and pain,
To share in patient suffering and loss
The unutterable anguish of His Cross. . .
Who manifest eternal Love again.

Martyrs, virgins, soldiers, beggars, kings,
O mighty army of the saints of God,
Pity one so often lost to good,
And pray to Him Whose wisdom moves all things
That of His mercy He will condescend
To call an humbled, sorrowing soul His friend!

HENRIETTA DANA SKINNER.

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PRO JUVENTUTE

By KILIAN J. HENNRICH

THE DISTRIBUTION of the newly founded decoration, the Star "Pro Juventute" of the Catholic Boys Brigade of the United States, naturally arouses the interest of many. No doubt, the prominence of the distinguished citizens honored, the appreciation with which the Star was received and the world-wide publicity it received stimulated curiosity. Some voices were heard declaring the decoration "just another scheme for publicity," but the majority, after investigating its objects, declared its legitimacy, usefulness and great possibilities.

The Star "Pro Juventute" was founded by the National Board of Directors of the Brigade for the general purpose of recognizing merit and outstanding service in behalf of childhood and youth. Whether this service consists in the promotion of wholesome child-legislation, educational development, active leadership, financial or moral support, all deserve recognition by an organization founded in behalf of childhood and youth.

The annual distribution of the honor is made by the executive committee of the Board of Directors, acting as a court of honor. The recipients are: citizens of the United States and others. The Star is issued in two ranks: plain and with wreath.

This year's recipients of the Star with their citations are: President Herbert Hoover, for calling the White House Conference for Child Health and Protection. His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes, honorary president of the Brigade, whose labors for childhood and youth through the archdiocesan charities and school board are admired by all. Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, for his great interest shown in childhood and youth by promoting legislation and social work in their behalf. Dr. George J. Ryan, president of the Board of Education of the City of New York, honored for his long service in the cause of education and also as a member of the national board of the Brigade for many years. The Reverend Edward Roberts Moore, Ph.D., Director of Social Action, Catholic Charities, for his interest in camps, boys clubs, brigades and other activities for youth. The other three: Mr. Joseph M. Adrian, jr., Dr. Daniel Donovan, chief-surgeon, Police Department, New York, and Magistrate Sylvester Sabbatino, Brooklyn, for showing great interest in their positions as members of the National Board of Directors of the Brigade. To all, the Star was presented for definite service to youth and was by no means intended to cover other achievements in other fields of endeavor. Nor has the distribution any political significance.

Besides the annual decoration of American citizens, international awards will be made from time to time. This distribution has, in addition, some other definite objectives of great importance. These are: (1) The fostering of amity among the youth of the world. The time has passed when those of a riper age alone decide the affairs of nations. It is youth who energetically demands reforms at present and forcefully strives to obtain them. Amity among youth of the different nations should promote understanding and good-will and should mitigate the harshness of selfish nationalism. (2) The upholding of Christian principles in the education and training of youth according to the encyclicals of the Holy See. All who are engaged in the battle against materialism, liberalism, paganism, Bolshevism and pseudo-science need all the encouragement that can be given them in order to persevere in their good work. (3) The growth and the extension of the Catholic Youth International, in which the Brigade holds membership and which is so dear to the heart of the Supreme Pontiff. This growth—and in consequence, its influence—will never be brought about unless our Catholic youth is first organized nationally along diocesan plans without any affiliation or membership in neutral or foreign organizations not directly under ecclesiastical supervision, guidance and control.

The distinguished men of other lands who are being honored this year have each furthered one or several of the special objectives mentioned. The first Star was sent to His Holiness Pope Pius XI not as a decoration—since it is not possible to add luster to the Apostolic See by such means—but as a gift, with the request for a blessing of the decoration and its objects and of past and future recipients. Those internationally recognized are: Premier Mussolini, Italy, for upholding Christian principles in the education and training of youth, and for settling the problems about youth between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Monsignor Wolker, the indefatigable general director of Catholic Youth in Germany, whose labors, continuing those of his illustrious predecessor, are well known. The "Fundamental Law" (*Grundgesetz*) of his organization, recently published, is a notable document with objectives similar to those the Star is intended to recognize. Finally, Colonel Louis Tierney, the founder of the Catholic Boys Brigade in Ireland, who for many years has shown great interest in youth and whose work contributed to the founding of the Brigade in the United States. Others will be recognized later.

The appreciation of those honored was beyond expectation. It shows that there is strength in union. Only by uniting our forces, can a Catholic Youth Movement impress by numbers and results. Hundreds of thousands of boys are grouped in parish units without diocesan unity or national cohesion. Their affiliation with the Catholic Boys Brigade would not only establish unity in training but would also gather forces and secure all the benefits of a national organization which is a part of the Catholic Youth International.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE IRISH LAND ANNUITIES

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: Dr. John A. Ryan's two papers on "The Irish Land Annuities," appearing in your issues of September 28 and October 5, display such an amazing ignorance of the fundamental facts underlying the question which he undertakes to discuss, that I regret I have not the time, even had you the space, to make a detailed reply. I must confine my reply to a single point, which, however, is basic. In Dr. Ryan's first paper he states:

"The legal case for non-payment is exceedingly complex and technical. All that will be attempted here is to analyze the two main arguments advanced by Mr. De Valera. One of them is based upon the fact that the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 assigned the land annuities in both Southern and Northern Ireland to the respective governments which were to be set up in these areas. It is difficult to take this argument seriously. The act just mentioned was never accepted by the authorized representatives of Southern Ireland and never went into effect there. It was supplanted by the treaty setting up the Irish Free State which was signed in December, 1921, and duly approved in January, 1922. Since the Free State government never accepted any part of the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, it obviously never recognized or ratified the provision about retaining the land annuities. On the contrary it paid them over to Great Britain from the beginning."

Dr. Ryan is apparently in complete ignorance of the fact that the Free State itself was created under the Government of Ire-

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land Act in conjunction with the so-called treaty. That so-called treaty, instead of providing for its approval by the Dail Eireann of the Irish Republic, by whose plenipotentiaries it had been negotiated, expressly provided that it should be approved by the House of Commons of Southern Ireland created by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. The last paragraph of the so-called treaty, paragraph 18, reads as follows:

"18. This instrument shall be submitted forthwith by His Majesty's government for the approval of Parliament and by the Irish signatories to a meeting summoned for the purpose of the members elected to sit in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland, and if approved shall be ratified by the necessary legislation."

Dr. Ryan apparently is also in ignorance of the fact that it has been judicially determined by an American court in a suit brought by the Free State itself, that the Free State is the successor to the government of Southern Ireland. This was decided by Judge Peters of the Supreme Court of New York in the case of Irish Free State, et al., vs. Guaranty Safe Deposit Company, Eamonn De Valera, et al. 129 N. Y. Misc. 551. In that case the writer, with Messrs. Martin Conboy and Frank P. Walsh, appeared as counsel for Eamonn De Valera and Stephen O'Mara, trustees of the Irish Republican funds. The Supreme Court of New York held that the Irish Free State had no right to the funds subscribed to the Irish Republic in this country, on the specific ground that the Free State was in no sense a successor to the Irish Republic, but was a British dominion existing under and by virtue of British law and a successor to the former government set up under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. I quote from the findings of fact and conclusions of law announced in the judgment of law:

Findings of Fact

"74. Pursuant to Articles 17 and 18 of the treaty a meeting of the members elected to sit in the Parliament of Southern Ireland was held for the purpose of approving the treaty and appointing a provisional government. This meeting was held January 14, 1922, and the treaty was duly approved, which is Plaintiffs' Exhibit 141, and a provisional government was duly set up. . . .

"106. On October 25, 1922, the Provisional Parliament passed a bill adopting a constitution for the Irish Free State. . . .

"109. On December 5, 1922, the British Parliament passed an act known as the Irish Free State Constitution Act, 1922, wherein it was provided, among other things, that the Constitution adopted by the Provisional Parliament on October 25, 1922, should be the Constitution of the Irish Free State."

Conclusions of Law

"4. The plaintiff Irish Free State is not and never was a free and independent government in Ireland and does not and never did comprise the Northern counties in Ireland and the whole of Ireland, and is and at all times was a government owing allegiance to the government of Great Britain and to the King thereof.

"5. The government of the Irish Free State is not and never has been other than a continuation of the government which previously existed in Ireland, to wit, the British government, and is merely a form of the British government in Ireland.

"6. Whatever powers and rights of government may be possessed by the plaintiff Irish Free State came to it through and from the British government."

It, therefore has been judicially determined by an American court that the present Free State government is a British dominion government in succession to the preceding British government of Ireland, the government of Southern Ireland, created under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, the Free State owing its existence to the approval of the House of Commons of Southern Ireland as provided by the treaty itself. Dr. Ryan concedes that by the Government of Ireland Act the British government remitted the land annuities to the government of Northern Ireland and to the government of Southern Ireland created under that Act, in partial compensation for overtaxation which a British Parliamentary Commission had found had been imposed since the Act of Union in 1800. He does not state, though it is a fact, that the Northern government of Ireland has ever since retained the annuities with the complete consent of the British government. He attempts to claim that the Free State is not entitled likewise to retain them because he alleges the Free State has no connection with the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. This statement can only be made in ignorance of the facts above stated and judicially determined.

The remainder of Dr. Ryan's articles, particularly with reference to the secret Hills-Cosgrave agreement, is equally fallacious. Unfortunately I am so engaged in court matters at the present moment that I have not time to reply in further detail.

It is with hesitancy that I charge a man of Dr. Ryan's standing with ignorance of facts which are fundamental to the question which he purports to discuss. My respect, however, for Dr. Ryan is such that I cannot believe he would intentionally suppress facts destructive of his entire argument.

JOHN F. FINERTY.

Toronto, Ont.

TO the Editor: The Reverend John A. Ryan's article published in your issue of September 28 is a clever but inaccurate attempt to support Great Britain's claim against the Irish Free State for payment of Irish land annuities.

The reverend gentleman would have us believe that the Government of Ireland 1920 Act is no longer on the Statute Book owing to the fact that the Cosgrave government, unlike the Ulster six counties government, failed to take advantage of it, instead ignored the provisions of the said act and paid annually the Irish Free State land annuities to the British government.

Father Ryan contends that owing to the 1920 Act having been dormant, in so far as Southern Ireland was concerned, during the Cosgrave régime, the sleeping sickness has killed the act and thus it no longer exists. That is strange reasoning when one recalls how frequently the British government during the time of the Land League in Ireland, awoke from their slumbers old musty acts of Parliament passed during the reigns of Edward III and Queen Ann and made use of the same to prosecute Irish farmers who took Parnell's advice to "Keep a firm grip on your homesteads."

Father Ryan assures us that the treaty also had a hand in the killing of the 1920 Act, and the removal of this most inconvenient act from the path of his friend—the British government. Thus additional loot is available for dear Albion to collect from the Irish Free State.

If the 1920 Act no longer exists, where and from whom does the Northeast Ulster government get authority to collect and retain the land annuities of six Ulster counties?

The much debated 1920 Government of Ireland Act made the interest and sinking fund of land stock a charge on the revenues of Great Britain alone and gave the land annuities unconditionally to the two Irish Parliaments created by the act.

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The annuities in the six counties of Northern Ireland have ever since been collected and retained by the Craig government. The Act of 1920 was on the Statute Book before the treaty was signed and was the foundation of that agreement. The treaty made no reference direct or indirect to the land annuities, therefore the legal right to retain them in Ireland is undeniable. The only financial liability toward Great Britain imposed by the treaty was contained in Article V, which made the Irish Free State liable for a proportion of the United Kingdom public debt and war pensions to be determined by agreement or arbitration "having regard to any just claims by way of set-off or counter-claim on behalf of Ireland." Article V was cancelled in December, 1925. The cancellation ended all legal financial obligations of the Irish Free State to the British government, with the exception of a yearly payment of £250,000 imposed by the boundary agreement.

Your correspondent is dogmatic in his support of Britain's claim, but descends quickly to mere supposition when confronted with the "Financial Relations Commission" report which proved that Ireland had been overtaxed by Britain since the Union of 1800 to an amount over £300,000,000. The reverend gentleman calmly supposes that the British debt owed to Ireland has been settled, how, when, or where he tells us not. That huge debt to Ireland has not been settled; up to the present Great Britain has treated it as "a mere scrap of paper" and unjustly demands payment of land annuities from the Irish Free State while being deeply in debt to Ireland.

Times have changed, thank God, and Britain must face the music and settle fairly and above board with Ireland.

JAMES S. MCGINNIS.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: My rejoinder to the five letters appearing in the last and the present issues of THE COMMONWEAL will deal only with points which are strictly relevant to the positions which I tried to maintain in my articles under date of September 28 and October 4. What I have to say occupies sufficient space without bringing in extraneous facts, reflections or opinions. Taking the communications in order, the first of them that I wish to consider occurs in the letter from Timothy P. Slattery. He contends that the assignment of the annuities to Southern Ireland in the Act of 1920 carries the implication that England regarded them as belonging there. Undoubtedly that is a fact, but it must be kept in mind that this Act required from both Southern and Northern Ireland contributions by way of taxes to the United Kingdom, whereas under the treaty, no such taxation was imposed on the Irish Free State. In other words, the right of Southern Ireland to keep the annuities became offset, in some degree at any rate, by the right of the Free State to be free from imperial taxation. Another point which is made in this letter apparently rests on a misconception of my use of the "two-edged sword" figure. My reasoning in that connection was not a defense of the British claims to the annuities, but an *argumentum ad hominem* against Mr. De Valera. I wanted to suggest that it would have been more convenient for himself if he had not used this particular moral argument.

In the letter from John B. Collins, three positions are set up which deserve consideration. The first is based upon the fact that certain prominent Irish lawyers decided that "the Irish Free State is entitled to retain the land purchase annuities." Over against that authority, I would place the five equally distinguished Irish legal authorities who maintained the opposite thesis (see pages 51-65 of the Government White Book, "Land Purchase Annuities," Dublin, 1932). My own conclusions on the legal question are stated at length further on in this rejoinder, where I deal with the long letter by Mr. Finerty. In the second place, Mr. Collins intimates that the burden of proof is upon those who defend the case for the payment of the annuities to England. That would be true were it not for the fact that the annuities have been paid for ten years by the duly constituted authorities of the Irish Free State; consequently the presumption is in favor of that side. Finally, the moral question raised in the last paragraph of Mr. Collins' letter implies that if Mr. De Valera had handed over the June installment of the annuities to Great Britain, they could never be got back. I made no such assumption. All that I contended was that as a matter of practical wisdom in seeking peaceful adjustment of the matter, Mr. De Valera should have paid over that installment of the annuities conditionally, subject to their final disposition through direct negotiation or arbitration.

Before dealing with Mr. Finerty's letter, I shall take up very briefly the communications from Mr. McGinnis. The writer asks how the Northeast Ulster government gets "authority to collect and retain the land annuities of six Ulster counties," if the Act of 1920 no longer exists. The answer to that question is very simple. The aforesaid act was accepted by the people of the six counties and duly put into effect there by the British Parliament, whereas it was not accepted by the people of Southern Ireland, nor ever translated into full and formal operation by the British Parliament in the latter region. This matter will be discussed at length in my rejoinder to Mr. Finerty, as also will one or two other observations on the same subject made in some of the other letters.

Toward the end of his letter Mr. Finerty attributes to me this allegation: "The Free State has no connection with the Government of Ireland Act of 1920." Nowhere in either of my articles did I make this assertion or any equivalent assertion. The only provision of the Act of 1920 which I had occasion to deal with was that which authorized the retention of the annuities by the government of Southern Ireland. This provision, I contended, never went into legal effect. While I was right in this conclusion, my premises could have been more specific.

The Government of Ireland Act passed the British Parliament, December 23, 1920. Section 73 provided that different parts of the act might come into operation on different "appointed days," through Orders in Council. April 19, 1921, became the "appointed day" for the provision concerning the Lord Lieutenant, and May 3, 1921, for the remaining provisions, with certain exceptions. Among the exceptions was Section 26, relating to the land annuities. No Order in Council was ever issued putting into effect that portion of this section which dealt with the annuities in Southern Ireland. (Cf. the Government White Book, "Land Purchase Annuities," Dublin, 1932.)

Therefore, the provision permitting Southern Ireland to retain the annuities never obtained force and validity in British law. On the other hand, as I have already written, the Act of 1920 "was never accepted by the authorized representatives of Southern Ireland. . . ." Upon what ground then can it be urged that the disputed provision possesses legal validity?

On the ground, answers Mr. Finerty, "that the Free State itself was created under the Government of Ireland Act in conjunction with the so-called (sic) treaty." In consequence of this connection—such seems to be his inference—the Free State automatically accepted and reënacted all the provisions of the Act of 1920, including those that had not been put into effect by an Order in Council. This is one of the most astonishing examples of *non sequitur* that has ever come to my attention.

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Moreover, the premise upon which it rests is false. Let us review the sequence of pertinent events.

Article 17 of the Anglo-Irish Treaty decreed: "Steps shall be taken forthwith for summoning a meeting of members of Parliament elected for constituencies in Southern Ireland since the passing of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and for constituting a provisional government. . . ." At the beginning of this article, it was stated that the object of this meeting was to provide for "the administration of Southern Ireland during the interval which must elapse between the date hereof and the constitution of a Parliament and government of the Irish Free State. . . ." Evidently the British as well as the Irish signers of the treaty regarded the constitution and government contemplated in the Act of 1920 as quite dead, as no longer legally competent to carry on "the administration of Southern Ireland. . . . " At the end of the same article it is decreed that "the British government shall take the steps necessary to transfer to such provisional government the powers and machinery requisite for the discharge of its duties. . . ." Evidently the British signatories did not think that the Act of 1920 had sufficient legal vitality to transfer power or authority to the provisional government. Yet Mr. Finerty and three associates assert in a letter to the Washington *Post,* October 16, 1932, that the Act of 1920 "is still in force." In his letter to THE COMMONWEAL, Mr. Finerty declares that the Free State was created "under the Government of Ireland Act." If the word, "under" is intended to signify "under the authority of," Mr. Finerty is evidently and egregiously mistaken. The real authority is to be found in Section 17 of the treaty.

Article 18 of the treaty required that instrument to be submitted for approval to a meeting of "the members elected to sit in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland. . . ." This provision does not justify the inference, or the assumption, that either the approval of the treaty or the creation of the Free State took place under the authority of the Act of 1920. It merely shows that the signatories to the treaty utilized the electoral and parliamentary machinery of the act to provide an authoritative and representative assembly for the approval of the treaty. In exactly the same way the Dail Eireann, which was the legislative assembly of the Irish Republic, had decided, May 2, 1921, to recognize "the popular elections held under the said statute" [the Act of 1920] and eight days later had resolved "that the said elections be regarded as elections to the Dail Eireann." Mr. Finerty will not contend that these decisions constituted recognition of the act itself, or that they were adopted "under the Government of Ireland Act." In its proclamation of May 2, 1921, which contains the first of the quotations given above, the Dail declared illegal "the so-called Government of Ireland Act, 1920." It is to be noted, moreover, that Articles 17 and 18 of the treaty do not direct their mandates to be carried out by the "Parliament of Southern Ireland," but by a "meeting of [its] members." When it was held to carry out these mandates this meeting was composed of the same men who had been elected as members of the Second Dail Eireann in accord with the action taken by the First Dail Eireann, May 10, 1921. When they met as the Second Dail Eireann these men obviously did not constitute that Parliament of Southern Ireland which was contemplated by the Act of 1920. Neither did they become the "Parliament of Southern Ireland" when they assembled as a "meeting" to ratify the treaty.

January 14, 1922, this body approved the treaty and set up the provisional government called for in Article 17. Thereupon, the provisional government became the only legal governing body in Southern Ireland, receiving its powers not from the Act of 1920 but from the British Parliament (Article 17). It continued to be supreme until the establishment of the Provisional Parliament (sometimes referred to as the Third Dail Eireann) whose members were elected in June, 1922. Sitting as a Constituent Assembly, the Provisional Parliament adopted the draft constitution, October 25, 1922, thus setting up the Irish Free State.

From the foregoing recital it is evident that the exceedingly tenuous and feeble spark of life which remained in the Act of 1920 was extinguished January 14, 1922, when, under the authority of the treaty, the provisional government came into existence and operation. Seven days earlier the British Parliament had virtually repealed the act, when it approved the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

Mr. Finerty's citations and arguments from the decision of Judge Peters are, respectively, irrelevant and futile. He attributes to the court the opinion that "the Free State is the successor to the government of Southern Ireland." No such inexact language was spoken by Judge Peters. Here are his actual words: "The government of the Irish Free State is not and never has been other than a continuation of the government which previously existed in Ireland, to wit, the British government. . . . " Precisely. And the powers of the Free State were not derived, as Mr. Finerty asserts, from the "government of Southern Ireland, created under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920," but from the "British government," acting through Article 17 of the treaty, and approving the Irish Free State Constitution Act, December 5, 1922. In describing the body that approved the treaty, Judge Peters is careful to avoid such phraseology as that used by Mr. Finerty. He designates it not as "the House of Commons of Southern Ireland," but as "a meeting of the members elected to sit in the Parliament of Southern Ireland." The Judge is exact; Mr. Finerty is inexact. Let me now return to Mr. Finerty's *non sequitur*. Even if the Free State were "the successor to the government of Southern Ireland," his case would not be salvaged. Surely he does not mean to assert that a "successor" government must necessarily continue in force all the organic law and the statutory enactments of its predecessor! As a matter of fact, "the government of Southern Ireland" never enacted anything. To assume that a "successor" government becomes automatically bound to carry out all the provisions of the act which created its predecessor, even those provisions that the makers of the act failed to put into effect, is to advance a new and astonishing rule of constitutional interpretation.

The legal authority for paying the annuities to Great Britain is, as I stated in my first paper in THE COMMONWEAL: Article 4 of the Provisional Government Order, issued April 7, 1922; Article 79 of the Free State Constitution, adopted October 25, 1922; and Section 12 of the Land Act, passed by the Free State Parliament August 9, 1923. The first two of these enactments are general. The third is specific but it relates only to the annuities due under the Land Purchase Acts passed from 1891 onward. The accumulated annuities covered by the Acts 1881-1888 were paid over to the British National Debt Commissioners under the authority of the Local Loans Vote in 1926, and the annuities still due under the 1881-1888 Acts were by a paragraph in the Ultimate Financial Settlement, March 19, 1926, converted into a stipulated sum to be paid over annually for a period of twenty years.

Therefore, the position which Mr. Finerty tries to hold against paying the annuities to Great Britain, is from every point of view without legal warrant or foundation.

REV. JOHN A. RYAN.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Good Earth

NOTHING, it appears, is quite so difficult to convey in the theatre as the feeling of the soil. Countless dramatists have tried it and failed. In Desire Under the Elms, and through the person of the old father, O'Neill did pile up the burden of the New England rocks, and of a stone scarred earth that yielded livelihood only after a stern battle. But he created this feeling chiefly in terms of rebellion. He was not writing of a kindly soil and of rich harvests, any more than in his plays of the sea he was writing of a loving ocean, or of bright sunlight playing on waters clipped by fresh trade winds. In other words, O'Neill creates feeling in nature through the negative reaction of his characters, even to the point of hate. The more difficult art, and one which few of our modern playwrights have mastered, is to evoke nature in her spirit of abundance. It has been done in novels, but not, to my recollection, in plays. Certainly the dramatization by Owen and Donald Davis of Pearl Buck's The Good Earth is conspicuous for the feelings it talks about but fails to re-create in the audience. The word earth is in nearly every alternate line but the fragrance of the soil is never in the air.

A possible explanation of this almost universal difficulty may lie in the fact that a sense of oneness between man and the soil is one of the least articulate of human emotions. We don't hear farmers going into ecstacies over ploughing and seeding and harvesting. Their companionship with nature is one of long and accepted intimacy. It is the city people, who have never felt the loose ground between their toes, who drift into raptures over rolling fields of grain. The novelty of their sensations belies the very intimacy which binds the farmer with an almost mystical tyranny to his land. Plays, however, are written for people of the city. The playwright, growing conscious of his future audience, tries to translate the mute tenacity and love in the farmer's being into words, explanatory words which, by their very use, belie the thing described. It is only through character and situation that the playwright can hope to create the illusion of reality, by showing what the farmer does when some one tries to remove him from his land or the sacrifices he will make to live near and by and for his growing things that have become one with his life through his long hours of labor.

There are plenty of situations of this sort in Mrs. Buck's story of the Chinese farmer boy, Wang Lung, and O-Lan, his slave wife; their passion to acquire more and more land, their simple joy in the harvests, their terror of the spirits of the air who bring drought and famine, their refusal to sell part of their land even to prevent starvation and death. But in an overanxiety to convince the audience, the playwrights turn these tenacious instincts into wordy rhapsodies about the land, phrases which might be permitted in the full length of a novel, and as a poetic license, but which in the two hours of a play come with maddening frequency. They make that which is beautiful only because it is unconscious and instinctive quite banal by being articulate and rhetorical.

Then, too, there is the everlasting difficulty of creating illusion by putting western actors with western voices into wigs and yellow grease paint and making them credible orientals. Now that recent plays have shown us the ability of negro actors, we almost shudder at the mockery of old plays in which red lips and burnt cork tried to turn white men into darkies. Ethel Barrymore's Scarlet Sister Mary was probably the last effort

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NEXT WEEK

PLANNING TRANSPORTATION, by Lyle W. Cooper exposes the arteries of our national commerce and gives a comprehensive and brief survey of the difficulties afflicting our railroads both from outside influences and internal strains. . . . ON THE SCOPE AND FUNCTION OF A UNIVERSITY, by Roy J. Deferrari, continues the discussion by the Dean of the Graduate School of the Catholic University of America on the purpose and prospects of higher education in our own times. This is an important and competent elucidation of essentials if our civilization is to be distinguished by progress rather than a stupid mis-direction or dry rot and degeneracy. . . . . CHINATOWN, by John M. Martin is a vivid eye-opener. Our Chinese residents, when they are not regarded through the false perspective of racial antagonism, are most commonly seen with the eyes of Hollywood or magazine fiction that portrays them as uncommonly subtle monsters. Pearl S. Buck's novels have no doubt done much to correct a lack of human appreciation for the Chinese on their own soil. This fascinating article will do much to reveal the true and the human side of the Chinese in our country. It is a sight-seeing tour that shows not only the colorful, exotic outside of Chinatown, but also the inside. . . . JUST TARDY, ST. THOMAS! by Helen Walker Homan is another of her delightful letters to the apostles. She may pull their legs a bit, but not beyond the bounds of propriety. And in the course of pursuing her amiable familiarities, the laymen will be apprised of a lot of valuable information of which he was not before aware. St. Thomas is glimpsed in his proper person as a gentleman and a saint.

of this sort, and it was fatally unconvincing. In view of the fact that the Theatre Guild employed a number of resident Chinese to create authentic feeling in Roar China, it is a little difficult to see why, in a play trying to re-create the earthy poetry of Mrs. Buck's novel, they should have risked so much in using western actors. To hear the dry Shavian voice of Henry Travers masquerading as an old Chinese farmer, or the mellifluous larynx of the enormous Sydney Greenstreet trying to be unmusical comedy as a poor fat relative, or to hear the unmistakable accents of Claude Rains as Wang Lung is to feel that this tragic play should break forth at any moment into the merry strains of a modern Mikado. Alla Nazimova is more successful as O-Lan, but that is quite as one would expect. She is not only an extraordinarily gifted emotional actress but infinitely more of the east than of the west. Unquestionably, the Guild should have drawn on the abundant Chinese talent resident in New York to give this play the semblance of authenticity. It sadly needs the eastern quality of voice and the eastern grace of gesture and the eastern stature to make it live as Mrs. Buck must have hoped to see it live. And the oriental actors might have given to the relatively undramatic theme, a poetic abstraction which would be more convincing than the explicitness of our own theatrical technique.

There is, of course, another underlying difficulty which the authors have not surmounted—the difficulty of condensing into two hours the whole lives of a play's characters. An occasional play, such as Milestones, may succeed in picturing successive generations, but only because it deliberately selects out three or four contrasting periods in their lives. The unfortunate play is usually the one which attempts to give that surging continuity which only the novel can encompass. This is superabundantly true of any play of the soil, where an inherent sense of unbroken growth and of the steady passing of years is the only way to keep the feeling of man and earth being thoroughly and abidingly wedded.

In spite of these general criticisms, which reflect the failure of the Guild's ambitious effort to achieve an important result, there are many moments of true dignity and power in The Good Earth. Some of its individual scenes are excellent, and the production is contrived with a jealous eye to important detail. Nazimova's art has never shone more brightly. (At the Guild Theatre.)

Criminal at Large

SINCE the producers ask to have the identity of the criminal in this play carefully concealed by conscienceless critics, one can do little more than acknowledge Edgar Wallace's posthumous mystery play as one of the best of its kind in many years, and pay an unreserved tribute to the group of actors who, under Guthrie McClintic's direction, have brought out its finer points and its overtone of psychological interest with amazing skill. To Alexandra Carlisle, in particular, who re-appears after many years of absence, and to William Harrigan and Emlyn Williams who play the leading male roles, one can only offer the highest tribute. It is one of those plays in which the slightest acting mis-step would have a devastating effect. Miss Carlisle is superbly domineering as a proud and tortured aristocratic mother. Mr. Harrigan, who deserves many fine things of our theatre, carries admirably the role of the chief detective, and Emlyn Williams achieves surprising moments as the fear-hounded young Lord Lebanon. Katherine Wilson is also well in the foreground of excellence. As plays of this type go, Criminal at Large has unusual distinction, and is guaranteed to furnish a tense evening to the most hardened theatre-goer. (At the Belasco Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Geneva at First Hand

The Society of Nations, Its Organization and Constitutional Development, by Felix Morley. Washington, D. C: Brookings Institution. $3.50.

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION is one of the most valuable research bodies we have, as well as one of the most agreeable places, anywhere, in which to live and work. Mr. Felix Morley is a young man, a vigorous and happy speaker, and has been specially engaged these past three years, in studying the League of Nations at first hand; of which study the present book is the excellent result. Its excellence needs no reviewer's seal, for it carries in its Foreword the approval of no less a personage than that competent, great-hearted and honorable gentleman, Sir Eric Drummond.

It is one of the books of which a mere review is not enough. It is a parent book; one that ought to produce a new family of books. It is "an examination of the constitutional development of the League, and of its growth from the first vague paper plans to the complicated and potentially powerful international machinery now firmly established at Geneva."

I think his phrase in that connection a peculiarly happy one: "While the League has accomplished much in these years, most of its work has been in the nature of foundation building for the period when governments and peoples shall desire to make use of its possibilities." There you have the key to success or non-success, any time these past thirteen years: when intelligent peoples, with any notion of self-government want to use international machinery for coöperation with other intelligent peoples, they will find it in fair running order in Geneva; set up by the efforts of a relatively small group of people, whom that very searching philosopher Ortega might call "the aristocratic minority, without which civilization can neither be constructed nor rebuilt."

To a student of American history the Sino-Japanese crisis in the League Council and Assembly shows strong resemblance to the status of the Continental Congress operating through our Articles of Confederation: "The Council has no real power beyond that which its members are willing to attribute to it in any particular emergency." That is the old fundamental American principle, abhorred by Hamilton, obscured rather than clarified by John Marshall's opinions, scotched and half buried by the Civil War, but still feebly alive as evidenced in both party platforms in the past few months.

This chapter (XII) on the Council, the United States, and the Sino-Japanese dispute is one of the most illuminating and thought-provoking in the book, and particularly in its final section, "Where and why the Council failed." This, the author says, was due to weaknesses which "Japan exposed ruthlessly, but in all probability with complete legality."

For dispassionate and calm vision, I would place this book with that of William Ernest Hocking's philosophic study of the mandate system in operation. Mr. Morley, perhaps, has had an even better opportunity than Professor Hocking to examine the inevitable chicanery of the beginnings of the League as well as the sometimes well-intentioned but unreal, or merely fatuous, attempts of historically illiterate statesmen to use the machinery gradually taking definite shape at Geneva, against the time when "peoples shall desire to make use of its possibilities."

In all this record, however, of the most severe test to which the League has yet been subjected, there is one thing that stands out as strange and unreasonable, in my opinion, after a lifetime

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of diplomacy and intimate knowledge of Japan. From 1868 on, Japan has followed closely the methods of Europe and the United States in dealing with international emergencies. Japan has accepted them as valid precedents. Now, since 1914, and since the growth of the League, Japan is faced by our alleged, but not wholly demonstrated, change of heart. In spite of the fact that we have all done all the things which Japan is now doing, have justified them, and have obtained international sanction for some of them, we now place a caveat against Japan's acceptance of our example on her own account.

Has it occurred to any leading statesman among us to visit Tokyo, to sit with responsible men there, and to say: "There was a time in the United States when every state honestly admitted and practised slavery. We fought a great war about it. Today we honestly consider it to be immoral. So, too, from the time you entered the family of nations in 1868 until 1914, we all followed practices with regard to other peoples, honestly, sometimes as a duty. We fought a great war about it. Today we consider such practices to be immoral. You are one of the five great peoples of the world. There is no way out without your full coöperation. What are we going to do? Will you take your place as leaders in the new order?"

Has anyone suggested that Manchuria, which is of as vital interest to Japan as any mandated territory to any mandatory power, be placed in trust to Japan by the League, and the inevitable situation we now have avoided?

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

Poland Since the War

Poland 1914-1931, by Robert Machray. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $3.75.

WHEN, after the cataclysm of the World War, reborn Poland appeared on the horizon, not only professional mourners and the enemies of this new republic considered it a *Saison Staat*, but even her friends were doubtful of her ability to live. Neither enemies nor friends understood rightly the spirit and character of this nation. They did not understand the basic fact that when, in 1795, the Polish state disappeared from the map of Europe, Poland did not die. Though her body was dismembered, her spirit survived. People accustomed to consider the life of nations from a materialistic point of view did not grasp this fact, did not appreciate that suffering had only strengthened and developed the spirit of the Polish people.

While outwardly Poland after the partitions was no more, inwardly the nation was only waiting for the opportunity to assert itself and to put into form its will to live. This opportunity was offered by the World War. When the war broke out, the leaders of the Polish people were ready to act, ready to carry out the plans for the re-creation of their political state which they had thought out long before.

Robert Machray in his "Poland 1914-1931" describes this process of the re-creation of the Polish state. Beginning with an account of the efforts of the Polish patriots to prepare for the restoration of Poland, he then describes step by step the events and acts that led to the actual establishment of the reborn Polish republic. Thereafter he traces the building up of this state through such important events as the Soviet war in 1920, the adoption of the constitution, the financial restoration and relapse which led to the Pilsudski intervention in 1926, and the gradual consolidation and strengthening under the present rëgime, dominated by the towering personality of Pilsudski, patriot, soldier and statesman.

Mr. Machray's book is the first well-rounded history of

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present-day Poland in the English language, and as such will be read with profit by everyone desiring to broaden his viewpoint and to understand some of the fundamentals of the European situation. Especially enlightening will it be to those well-meaning reformers who, having no knowledge of actual conditions, are ready to tinker irresponsibly with such inflammable problems as international frontiers.

The book gives "an account in chronological order, as far as possible, of the day-to-day drama, political and economic, of the restored state." It deals with years full of tremendous difficulties, dramatic events, trials and brilliant triumphs. It is objective in its presentation, clear and well documented. It is done not by a propagandist but by a careful student of history, a man who not so long ago, as he tells us, shared the impression that Poland was aggressive and militaristic and that, if the new freedom was soon lost, it would be the natural and just result of incompetence. However, first-hand acquaintance with Poland and her people caused him to revise this idea. His whole book substantiates his present opinion, that Poland has come to stay and that she is "a powerful factor making for the equilibrium of Europe and the peace of the world."

THADDEUS HOINKO.

A Harassed Poet

John Clare, by J. W. and Anne Tibble. New York: Oxford University Press. $3.75.

FIRST-RATE and badly needed are two expressions which no self-respecting critic of our time will permit himself to use. And yet I can think of no other words which so accurately summarize one's impression of this book. The Tibbles, aided of course by many other people, have unearthed a subject to which no lover of English letters will be indifferent, and have dealt with it just as one might have asked them to. All tedious, flabby, ever-so-psychoanalytical jabbering has been eliminated, and there emerge decent alignments of evidence which are reviewed sympathetically and sanely. Thus one is rendered grateful to the stars which presided over the birth of the Tibbles. They (i. e., the Tibbles) have not run amuck, and they have written an excellent book.

But why John Clare? The world had just about forgotten him, the peasant poet who made a stir in 1820, traveled to London in homespun, and drank a little too much ale in the company of Charles Lamb. But the public which enjoyed him as a curiosity soon tired of the fact that he was only a poet. Wherefore Clare, whose peasant lot was cast in the heartless days of enclosures and similar developments of progress, watched the light of hope die out, found it heartrenderingly difficult to support his family and went a trifle mad. This madness was, however, only relative. He wrote more lyrics, and some of them were very fine. Yet one is afraid that ultimately he and Macbeth were agreed upon the meaning of life.

The great value of this biography lies in the fact that it enables us to follow, step by step, the development of a poet born. Clare had neither education, in the strict sense, nor professional environment. Having proved himself a naturalist in the meaning given that word by Romanticism, he accomplished (as the authors very properly suggest) what Wordsworth had hoped to do. Thereafter his progress to poetry which was an evocation of his own inner life followed what are, perhaps, the laws of art in his time. One watches the unfolding of all this story with sentiments of joy, resentment, pity and anger, which prove that both book and subject are very much alive.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

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Briefer Mention

Ma Cinderella, by Harold Bell Wright. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.00.

THIS is the story of Ann Haskel, an illiterate and apparently vulgar and ruthless native of the Ozark Mountains, who proves herself to be essentially fine. Melodrama and romance follow the return home of her son, a highly educated young man brought up in ignorance of his backwoods origin. And a variation of the Cinderella theme is worked out with Ann in the rôle of "Ma" Cinderella, young Haskel as the prince, and Diane, a wealthy art student, as fairy godmother. Mr. Wright's novels are significant not as expressions of real human experience but as revelations of the day-dreams of inarticulate millions.

A Young Man of Fifty, by Rose C. Feld. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

CHRISTOPHER REDDING, the hero of this amusing satire, is a prosperous and substantially married business man who takes a quixotic and quite harmless interest in other ladies. Even the drastic cure to which he is finally subjected fails to stamp out the disease. Miss Feld has written fluently and yet exactingly. One may, however, legitimately object to superfluous touches like this: "Never, if he could help it, did he put a two-cent stamp on his letters. The color offended him." The book reads a little like an unintentionally ironical version of "The Fountain." This, as the world now runs, is commendable.

Three Fevers, by Leo Walmsley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

PERHAPS the first novel is as grave a problem to the book publisher as it is to the author. Both wish it to be a great success; both work hard over it; both, indeed, wonder what will happen to it. The book at hand by Mr. Walmsley is the sort which should please both publisher and writer by pleasing many readers. It is a story of the brawny fishermen of the English coast, treating their hopes and struggles with a charming simplicity and a forcefulness of style that suggests Hamsun.

Trafton Helen, by Jonathan Leonard. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.00.

THE INVERSION of Helen Trafton's name to form his title is perhaps symbolic of Mr. Leonard's approach to his theme, which, in this diluted though very original story of a schoolboy's censorship of his parents' morals, is in itself an inversion. If the author had chosen a comic or even satirical instead of a serious treatment, or realistic instead of fantastic descriptions, the novel would be far stronger and much more effective.

CONTRIBUTORS

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON is a veteran political correspondent for New York journals. His latest book is "Presidents I've Known and Two Near Presidents."

CHARLES MORROW WILSON contributes articles to current periodicals.

REV. C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J., writer, preacher and lecturer, is the author of "The Mind of the Missal" and many other books.

PIERRE LINN is a writer on philosophical subjects.

BOYD-CARPENTER, a writer on European politics, is attached to the faculty of the School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University.

HENRIETTA DANA SKINNER is a New York poet.

REV. KILIAN J. HENNRICH, O.M.CAP., whose works include "Boy Guidance" and "Boyleader's Primer," is the director of the Catholic Boys Brigade of the United States.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, is the author of "Undiplomatic Memories."

THADDEUS HOINKO is secretary of the American Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the United States.

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